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THE FAN-QUI IN CHINA,

IN 1836-7.

BY

TOOGOOD DOWNING, Esq.,

MEM. ROY. COLL. SURGEONS.

THE HIGH APPARENT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,

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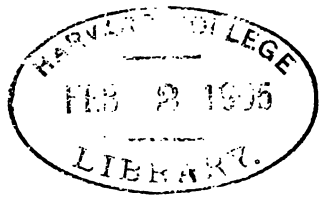

Textbook

CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

Inhabitants of Canton—The Tân-kea—Population of China—Chang-she's family-party—Rapid increase of population—Agriculture—Yao and Chun—War with the beasts—Pastoral ages—Quarrels between cultivators and shepherds — Expulsion of the latter — The grades of society — Encouragement to agriculture — Imperial ceremony—Processions of viceroys and governors—The buffalo of clay—Reign of Mantchoo emperors — Productiveness of the country — Extent of cultivated land—Division of the ground—The "working wives of Kiang-see"—Scarcity of animals—Water-engines—Collection of manures—Terrace cultivation —Life on the water—Fishermen—Emigration—Infanticide — Importation of rice — Means of smuggling—Famines — Difference between India and China — The Indian and Chinese at dinner—Area of Chinese empire—Immense family of the Chinese . . 1

CHAPTER II.

Outside shopkeepers of Canton—Oppression by mandarins —Secondary imposts—Dealings with foreigners—Spanish dollars — Opium trade — Native weights — The Taël — Candareen — Mace — The Tchen — Strings of money—Scales for heavy weights—Ivory balance and case — Taël — Catty — Pecul — China Street—Native females — Helpless gait — Process of forming small feet — Origin of the custom — Not adopted by the Tartars—Sedans of Hong merchants—Houses — Arrangement of shops — Warehouse of mixed goods — Butterflies and insects—Toys—Fireworks—Character of tradesmen — The Cumshaw — Tea-drinking — The chop 30

CHAPTER III.

Isolated state of the Chinese—Discovery of fire—Uncertainty of original discoveries—Gunpowder—Mariner's compass — Chinese injustice — Vaccination — Minor branches of art—Lacker-ware shops—Caution of the natives — General use of fans — Native customers— Their quiet, inoffensive behaviour—Operation of varnishing—Collecting the resin—The varnish-tree—Real Japan-ware—Chinese muster—Ivory carving—Sphere within sphere — Ho-shing — The skill of the carver — Ivory market—Tortoiseshell and mother-o'-pearl—Sandal wood—Black woods—Roots of bamboo—Pleasure derived from the wonderful—The figure-stone—Porcelain shops—Porcelain trade—Superiority of Chinese porcelain—Old and new ware—Manufacture of large pieces—The city of King-tse-tching . . . 58

CHAPTER IV.

The art of painting—National taste—Lamquoi, the painter—Artists' houses—The shop—Stone carving—Rice paper—Indian ink—The workshop—Copying—Manufacture of rice-paper drawings—Preparing the colours—The brushes—Native dexterity—State of the art in China—Minute workmanship—Ignorance of light and shade—Queen Elizabeth's portrait—Chinese landscapes—Very old drawings—Paintings on glass—Lamquoi's studio—Memento mori—Prospect of improvement . . 87

CHAPTER V.

Chinese festivals—New year of business—Chin-chin Ghos—China Street—Exclusion of females—Orderly behaviour—Foreigners in the mob—Exhibitions—Lof-pidgeon—Lamps and variegated lanterns—A Chinese illumination—Theatricals—Temporary stage—Male actresses—Degradation of comedians—Strolling troops—Floating theatres—Royal entertainment—Lord Macartney—Collection of plays—Songs and singing—Beauties of the drama—Novel dramatis personæ—The back streets—Felt statues—Music—Subscription of tradesmen—Festivals in general—The emperor and empress—The new year—Chinese felicity—Race of the Dragon-boats 118

CHAPTER VI.

The Celestial Empire—Temperate habits—Apothecaries' shops—Chinese doctor—Drugs—Ginseng—Wonder-working root—Herb-gatherers—Effects of tea and

opium—Jesuit Duhalde—Chinese ink—Two doctors at once—Mercury—Quack's handbills—Study of medicine — Anatomy—Misplaced knowledge—Astrology—Pious work—Singapore doctor—Physiology—The shadow in the water—The nose ancestor—Influence of the planets — Chinese Pentad — The five colours — The Yâng and the Yin — Fantastic theories — Doctrine of the pulse—Mahommedans—Fortunate days—Animal Magnetism 141

CHAPTER VII.

The experience of a thousand years — Inoculation for smallpox — The moxa — Fashionable doctor — Want of sleep—Curious treatment — School of medicine—History of smallpox—Vaccination—Interesting sight —Jesuits — Mr. Gutzlaff — Patients at Whampoa—Affecting scene—Ophthalmic hospital at Macao—Canton hospital — Handsome-face painters — Dispenser—Native dishonesty — Dr. Parker — The missionaries—Philanthropy 167

CHAPTER VIII.

Chinese hospital at Canton — Pleasing sight — Native patients—Ladies from Nan-king—Small feet—Rouge —The arched eyebrow—Obliquity of eyelids—Beauty —The hair — Married and betrothed — Dresses—Female colours — Extreme modesty — The twin-sisters—Close prisoners—Character of natives—Chinese gratitude — The Cheefoo's secretary — Opinion of the American—Ma-szeyay's poem—Number of patients—

Prevalent disorders—Affections of the eyes—Of the ears—Cutaneous diseases—Tumours—Native surgery—Bad cases—Contract between doctor and patient—Operations—Chinese fortitude—Moral courage . 187

CHAPTER IX.

The merchant sailor—Want of judicature—Rendezvous at Canton—Jack's taste—Sam-shu shops—Incongruous names—Coffee-shops—Natives of Canton—Depravity—Squeezing—Ma-tse—Extortion of mandarins—High treason—Seaport towns—Value of a dollar—Native honesty—Egg-house people—Hard case—The City of Refuge—Origin of Tân-kea—Laws and regulations—The Oranbadjoos—Character of crimes—Arson—The great fire at Canton—Lord Anson—Ghos-pidgeon—Fanaticism—Chinese pickpockets—The passage-boats—The Fan-qui outwitted—Battle-royal—The track of vice—Hog Lane 210

CHAPTER X.

Burglaries in Canton—Back streets—Mixed crowd—Native barbers—The Parsees—Coolies—Beggars—Lepers—Cripples — Cheap music — Noisy duns — Heavenly Flower Society — Poor-laws in China — Charitable institutions—Imperial generosity—Cheap living—City police — Wicket gates — Watchmen — Chinaman and his lantern—Large nursery — Espionnage — Governor Le—Official reports—Responsibility — Imperial edict—George IV.—Chinese government — Political sermons—Petit treason—Maxim against Maxim—Public

examinations — Literary perseverance — The Son of Heaven 233

CHAPTER XI.

Mandarins—Chinese punishments—Mild jurisdiction—The bamboo—Court of justice—Infliction of blows—Thanking the judge—Female offenders—The leather flapper—Consideration shown to women—The kia or cangue — Imperial clemency — Alleviation of punishment — Ty-yo, or hell—Prisons—Chain, handcuff and fetters—Torture — Criminal judges — Capital punishments—Chinese executioner — Strangulation — Polite request—The Ling-chy 257

CHAPTER XII.

Banishment — Attachment to native place — Hall of Ancestors—Neglected tombs—Emigrants—Tartary—Employment of exiles—The cold country—Goose-tail—Transportation to Elee—Siberia of China—The Leu Lee — Laws for foreigners — Homicide — Tân-kea—Tartars—Ma-out-tse—Chin-tchew men—Law of high-treason—The Son of Heaven—Petit treason—Partiality to foreigners — The old, young, and afflicted — Family feuds—Cursing a thief 272

CHAPTER XIII.

Our knowledge of the Chinese—The language—Protestant missionaries—Mixed races—Various sects—Superstitious natives—Owners of junks—Native sailors—Chin-tchew men—Idolatry—Teën-how—Procession—

Idolatrous entertainment—Offerings to spirits—The compass—Junks at Whampoa—Ghos-pidgeon—Very old custom — Government cargo-boats — Villages — Three days' festival—Chin-chin-Ghos—Salutations—Medley of sweet sounds—A cruise on shore—Ghos-house—Theatre—Musicians—Interior of temple—Notice to quit—Floating fireworks—Cautious retreat 285

THE FAN-QUI

IN

CHINA.

CHAPTER I.

Inhabitants of Canton—The Tân-kea—Population of China—Chang-she's family-party—Rapid increase of population—Agriculture—Yao and Chun—War with the beasts—Pastoral ages—Quarrels between cultivators and shepherds — Expulsion of the latter—The grades of society — Encouragement to agriculture—Imperial ceremony—Processions of viceroys and governors — The buffalo of clay — Reign of Mantchoo emperors—Productiveness of the country—Extent of cultivated land—Division of the ground.—The "working wives of Kiang-see" — Scarcity of animals — Water-engines—Collection of manures—Terrace-cultivation —Life on the water—Fishermen—Emigration—Infanticide — Importation of rice — Means of smuggling —Famines — Difference between India and China —The Indian and Chinese at dinner—Area of Chinese empire—Immense family of the Chinese.

As we watch the mass of moving human beings in the square before the factories, and observe

the crowd every moment replaced qy herds of others, who seem to have no occupation, but are apparently formed to eat and drink, *nati consumere fruges*, we are at a loss to imagine where such immense multitudes are able to find a habitation during the night, or in stormy and tempestuous weather. It seems quite plain that these poor people do not require so much accommodation as those of a similar class in other parts of the world, or else the ground would be covered with their dwellings. Every part of the land swarms with natives, and we have seen that even the surface of the waters is not exempt from the living burden. Canton alone is supposed to contain a million of living human beings, and every town in like proportion, while the inward lakes are represented as being covered with the houses of inhabitants, who can find no legal resting-place on shore. The poorer classes lie upon the floor, with their heads resting on the bamboo pillows which have been described, so that very little space is occupied by each individual. Many families can, therefore, live in the same chamber, and as many couches be made up for them to pass the night as the floor can possibly hold. In addition to this, thousands

of those poor wretches who live upon the water make their little san-pans their only dwellings, and scarcely move from their position for days together, drawing a small shed or cover over them during the time devoted to sleep.

There have been various and very contradictory estimates as to the amount of population in China; the cause of the discrepancy of opinion arising no doubt from the very uncertain nature of the data upon which they have been founded. Very little reliance, I should think, can be placed upon the generality of those accounts, which are said to have been derived from official authority; such as those calculated from the list of the people who pay duty to the government. The authorities in these cases altogether overlook those hosts who are exempted from the taxes, such as the mandarins, literati, stragglers and outlaws of all sorts, and the vast numbers of those who take up their abode on the water. Besides this, the heads of families alone are subject to the poll-tax, and it is a matter of opinion how many individuals are to be included in one of these family circles. The Chinese reckon six on an average to each, while our countrymen consider that five is quite a sufficient number. It appears to me doubt-

ful whether either of these estimates is correct, as it is well known that the sons and daughters remain in the family after they are married, and are only obliged to leave when the great increase in numbers, from the addition of their children, absolutely forces them to seek some other habitation. Thus, the Emperor observes in the Sacred Instructions, that nine generations once lived under the same roof, and that "in the family of Chang-she, of Keang-chow, *seven hundred* partook of the same daily repast."* The patriarchs, therefore, of these two and three fold generations may be alone considered by the government as the heads of the family, and the tax imposed upon them accordingly, without any account being taken of the parents of the younger fry.

The latest estimate which has been made on this interesting subject is that by Mr. John Robert Morrison, the son of Dr. Morrison of Macao, and published by him in the Companion to the Anglo-Chinese Calendar for 1832. It is obtained from a work published by Imperial authority, professing to be the result of a census taken in the year 1813. By this account, the population in China would reach the enormous amount of 360,443,000 souls. This

* Davis, vol. ii., p. 406.

is the highest estimate which has been given in, and as it was made for the express purpose of setting at rest the various speculations on the subject, it has gained a great deal of credit in this country. Still there are many, even among those who may be supposed most capable of judging, who are inclined to consider this statement greatly exaggerated, and at variance with the best accounts heretofore obtained. Thus, between the estimates of the famous Dr. Morrison and his son, there is a wide difference; and, as they were both men of the greatest ability and research, and appear to have had nearly the same materials to work upon, it would be very difficult to form a decisive opinion as to their respective merits. The learned doctor's statement was taken from an official work, entitled, "A Complete Statistical Account of the Empire of Ta-ts'-hing," which was published in the reign of Kien-loong, in the year 1790. This account appeared in 1817, and the amount of the population, including those who dwell upon the water, was under 150,000,000. This estimate became the received opinion of Europe for some time, and was approved by Mr. Thoms in his Chinese Courtship, and adopted by Klaproth.

In showing the different opinions which have been held upon this curious subject, it will be as well perhaps to go back to the earliest accounts with which we are acquainted. In the reign of Yang-ti, A.D. 609, an enumeration was made, in which 8,900,000 families alone were mentioned. In 1122, under the Emperor Hoei-tsong, the census amounted to 20,882,000 families; from whence was inferred very little more than double the number (46,734,000) of individuals. In 1290, in the reign of the great Kublai Khan, the heads of families who were subjected to a poll-tax amounted to 13,196,000; while in the reign of Hiao-tsong, in 1502, there were reckoned to be 53,282,000 individuals. The very reduced amount of 27,241,000 was given as the return, at the accession of the Tartar dynasty in 1644. These early statements appear to have been drawn up at times of internal commotion, before the empire was sufficiently reduced under the sway of a single monarch, and are, therefore, not deserving of much attention.

The amounts of population must have been considerably greater than those above mentioned even in those troubled times, as the country has always been considered, by every

account which we have received abundantly stocked with inhabitants. Whether it has really increased to the enormous amount mentioned of late years, is another question; but it appears to me, that there are many reasons which would lead one to believe that the highest estimates are not very much exaggerated. A calculation by analogy has been made, in which China has been compared, in the productiveness of the people, to the fertile Presidency of Bengal in Hindostan.* Allowing the same number of inhabitants to each of these countries, in proportion to the amount of square miles contained on their surface, nearly 228,000,000 of inhabitants would be contained in the Celestial Empire. This account agrees very well with that given by Amiot, in 1777. This gentleman, who was in high favour at the court of Pekin and resided for a long period in that capital, drew up a statement collected from official documents, by which the population would appear to be about 200,000,000, when the individuals exempted from the tax are included in the account. In confirmation of the two last statements, Father Allerstain has translated a manuscript found in the Chinese

* Edinburgh Cabinet Cyclopædia.

Board of Taxes, showing the result of a census which made the population amount to 198,214,624; a sum very near to the two former.

Now these two latter statements confirming that made by the comparison of China with Bengal, if there were any reasons produced, which would lead us to suppose that the former country was still more densely peopled than the latter, we should feel more inclined to receive the accounts given by Lord Macartney and the younger Morrison; both of whose estimates are considerably higher. It is hoped that two or three observations upon this subject, by one who has nothing to support them but his own individual opinion, will not be considered impertinent by those who have devoted their time and extensive learning to the subject.

For many centuries, we know that the population of the Chinese Empire has been rapidly on the increase, and that at the earliest period it was represented as in a dense and crowded state. This may be inferred from the gradual rise in the amount of even the imperfect estimates which have been obtained, with the exception of those taken at periods when the country was desolated by intestine war. The most decisive proof of this, however, is to be found

in the gradual change which has taken place in latter ages, with respect to the means of turning the surface of the ground to good account for the subsistence of its inhabitants.

It is the first principle of our nature to procure the means of satisfying the cravings of the appetite, and the face of the country would, therefore, be likely to alter, as the necessities of increasing numbers stimulated them to active exertion. Accordingly, we find, that in the earliest descriptions of China there is no mention made of that high state of cultivation in which it is found at the present day. In the earliest ages, the inhabitants derived their subsistence from the spontaneous fruits of the earth, and the animals killed in hunting; while the soil was overspread by one vast and continuous forest, similar to the back woods of America.

As civilization increased, which appears always to accompany increased population, the greatest efforts were made by the sovereigns to render the ground fit for cultivation. Yao and Chun have immortalized their names by the efforts which they made, and the great works which they projected, for clearing the land of its unfruitful encumbrances. Still for a long time

a very limited extent around the capitals could be subjected to the plough of the husbandman, while the surrounding parts were the abode of such numbers of wild animals, that armed bodies went forth with the prince at their head, to make war upon them.

In process of time, the face of the country was cleared throughout, and in addition to the tillers of the field great numbers of the people were employed in rearing cattle, and vast flocks of sheep were fed upon the pasturage of the open and extensive glades.

This pastoral character of the inhabitants, similar to that of their neighbours the Tartars, would indicate an almost unbounded country partially filled with a roaming and unsettled population. As the people increased in number, the quiet, settled habits of the cultivators would be sorely discomposed by the encroaches of the shepherds, who, by the nature of their employment, would be of an opposite temperament. Accordingly, we find that violent altercations took place between them, which ended in an open rupture, followed by the total defeat of the herdsmen, who were henceforth obliged to fly for safety to remote and almost inaccessible mountains. There they pursued their avoca-

tions with little interruption, but were henceforth considered little better than outcasts from society.

Formerly, the several grades of society ran thus: the cultivators of mind, such as the sages, literati, &c., ranked first; then the cultivators of the land; after them followed the shepherds and breeders of cattle; the manufacturers took up the fourth station; while the merchants and other exchangers of commodities were placed at the bottom of the list. The only change which has taken place of late years in the arrangement of this list is that, since their defeat, the shepherds have been treated with peculiar ignominy, and are now considered the very lowest caste of all.

There is little doubt but that the cultivators were assisted in this struggle by the leading men of the day, and the disgrace of the pastorals was sanctioned by the authority of government. It is very evident that at this period, and ever since, agriculture has been encouraged by the wisest and best men whom China has produced. It must have been found, that the breeding of cattle and the consequent extent of ground required for pasturage was quite inconsistent with the turning to advantage every acre, to

supply food for the demands of an increasing and clamorous population. The wise men foresaw the dearth which would be likely to prevail, and therefore used their utmost efforts to avert the calamity. Ponderous tomes have been written in praise of the cultivators of the soil and in recommendation of their exertions, whilst the highest rank and eminence have been given to those who have been particularly successful.

In order to impress the minds of the populace with the importance of this branch of industry, an annual observance was instituted more than two thousand years ago. This ceremony, which had been continued annually for many centuries, was neglected by some of the more degenerate princes, but was again revived by the third sovereign of the Mantchoo dynasty, named Yong-tching. Every year, on the twenty-fourth day of the second moon, corresponding to our month of February, this ceremony takes place. The Emperor himself takes a part in one of the ceremonials, while the viceroys and other grand mandarins superintend its management in the provinces. His Celestial Majesty prepares himself for it by fasting three days, and performing a great number of minor ceremonies.

He then repairs to the appointed spot, which is a field set apart for the purpose in the enclosure which surrounds the Temple of the Earth, accompanied by three princes, nine presidents of the high tribunals, and forty old and the same number of young husbandmen. When a preliminary sacrifice of the fruits of the earth has been made to the Supreme Deity, Shang-ti, the royal hand is applied to the plough, and a furrow is made of a considerable length. The princes and the mandarins follow the example, after which the field is delivered into the charge of the proper officer, who preserves the produce for the purpose of sacrifice. The sowing of the seed is preceded by a similar observance, and is then finished by the husbandmen.

A ceremony in honour of the same, takes place in the capital of each province. The governor parades through the streets crowned with flowers, and accompanied by a vast concourse of grandees, bearing flags which are decorated with the emblems of agriculture and portraits of people who were famous in that art; while the streets are adorned with the most fanciful and highly ornamented lanterns and triumphal arches. Figures in clay and porcelain are paraded through the streets, and

often are novel and ingenious. Among others is a buffalo of enormous magnitude made of clay, borne on the shoulders of forty men, and preceded by a boy who represents the Genius of Industry. When they arrive at the residence of the governor, he, in his capacity of Priest of Spring, delivers a speech in honour of agriculture. He then strikes the buffalo three times with a whip, after which the people fall upon it and break it with stones. The animal being opened at the termination of the ceremony, the contents, consisting of numerous smaller cows made of the same material, are distributed among the people.

Ouen-ti, one of the first monarchs of the dynasty of Hân, is said to have been the founder of these ceremonies in honour of agriculture, and the art rapidly advanced from that time to its present flourishing state. No civil commotions could disturb its steady progress, when it had thus taken a firm and solid root in the habits and manners of the people. Since the time of the conquest of the country by the Mantchoo Tartars, these foreign Emperors have ruled the country in a manner so just and mild that the Empire has ever since been in a state of profound peace and agriculture, among

other branches of industry, has thriven in a manner unprecedented in any former era.

The cultivation of the land, being then considered one of the most honourable occupations of life, and the agriculturists held up to so much distinction: the effect has been, that every portion of the ground capable of improvement has been turned to account, and China presents at the present time, a country which is perhaps not exceeded by any part of the world for the produce of the vegetable subsistence of the human species. It is true that the inhabitants are not skilled in the art of husbandry to the extent which a few of the nations of the West have to boast of, but they are vastly superior to the inhabitants of any other portion of Asia. Their industry and perseverance are a model for the rest of the world, and, if their fields cannot be said to produce such luxuriant crops as those of Great Britain, yet the extent of ground occupied by grain in China more than counterbalances the effect of the superior skill of the British farmer. Certain it is, that the land yielding grain in the Celestial Empire, exceeds, in proportion to its extent, the Presidency of Bengal or any other part of India.

According to Amiot, who derived his information from an official work, the extent of cultivated lands in China amounted to 596,172,500 English acres, the greater part belonging to the people. The whole of this extensive area is divided into small patches of one or two acres each, occupied by separate individuals. These little plots are separated from each other by small ditches to carry off the surplus water, and frequently by little footpaths alone, so that no space is uselessly thrown away. The tenants of these farms prepare the ground themselves for the reception of the seed, and often with the hand alone. A hoe or a spade is sometimes the only instrument of labour, while it has been observed that, occasionally, the ground is opened with the dibble before the seed is inserted. It is but rarely that a plough is to be seen, and even then the family of the husbandman are yoked to it instead of horses. The women are not exempted from this laborious employment, as they are considered throughout this ungallant country vastly inferior to the men. From this custom of making the females do the most laborious offices, it is an object with a Chinese of the lower orders to get a consort who is strong and healthy; on this account,

"the working wives of Kiang-see," are held in such general estimation throughout the provinces. A few cows, mules, and buffaloes, were seen by Barrow in his travels into the interior, but they were in a wretched condition. No pasture-ground could be spared for them, but they were obliged to pick up their scanty subsistence from the herbage which grows on the footpaths, or the banks of the ditches between the fields. By this policy, no portion of the earth is diverted from its most essential purpose, that of raising food for the subsistence of man.

Nothing can show to greater advantage, the industry and perseverance of the Chinese in pursuing their favorite and honourable employment, than the plans which they adopt for procuring for their soil the two most essential auxiliaries, water and manure. Rice, which is the staple production of the country, requires a great quantity of water for its successful cultivation. To obtain a supply, small canals and troughs lead through every plot of ground, and are adapted to each peculiar case with the greatest readiness and promptitude. They are chiefly made of bamboo, so that they are constructed at little expense, and are to be found in every little

plantation where their employment would be of any service.

The industry which is exhibited in procuring manures is really extraordinary, and the materials are often of a singular nature. So great a scarcity of domestic animals obliges the Chinese to have recourse to substances, the idea of which would never enter the head of any person whose wits were not sharpened by the prospect of starvation. No fastidious delicacy prevents these poor people from collecting those things, which in other countries are usually thrown away. Old men and children carry about baskets to receive mud, slime, and every species of refuse, as the old women with us carry bags to pick up bones, rags, and other matters in the streets of London. It is said that the barbers sometimes shave people and cut their hair for nothing, and merely make this apparently unprofitable business answer, in the same way as sweeps when they cleanse the chimneys for the sake of the soot. Every particle of the hair is preserved and sold to the farmers, who consider it a capital manure for the growth of rice.

It will readily be believed, that there must be some great stimulus to such exertions as these, which are almost unprecedented in any other

age or country. It is the stimulus of necessity which obliges these people to work constantly in this manner, upon pain of being starved if they neglect it in the slightest degree. No doubt, they feel somewhat impelled by the hope of distinction, which is constantly held out to those who deserve it; but this feeling would go but a little way towards forming those habits of indefatigable industry, which are so generally prevalent. They know that they depend entirely upon themselves, and if they relax their exertions their ruin is the necessary consequence. The Chinese cannot, like some other people, depend upon any but their relations for support. It has been asserted, that with the exception of the honour and duty which is always paid by children to their parents, no such feeling as brotherly love or humanity appears to reside in their breasts. They would sit down as quietly as ever and eat their own chow-chow if they saw another person before them, actually in the pangs of death from hunger; or look on with the same indifference, whether it were a rat or a Chinaman drowning beside them.

In addition to the ordinary mode of raising food from the land, it must be remembered that the sides of the mountains are not exempted

from paying their tribute. Those places which by their steepness are considered unmanageable by most other nations, are turned to advantage by these industrious people. Terrace above terrace rises around the mount often to the very summit, and glows with ripening grain, mixed with the green foliage of clustering fruit-trees. This plan of cultivation, almost peculiar to the Chinese, seen only and that partially in the hilly districts of Switzerland, must necessarily be a work of untiring perseverance, to be accomplished only by a nation which could build the Great Wall, or dig out the Imperial Canal a thousand miles in length. As if this ground was not sufficient for the exigencies of the inhabitants, we find that attempts are constantly made to drain the marshes, and often with success, thus adding fresh territories to those already laid under subjection of the plough.

With all this care and industry, the land does not yet appear capable of supporting the thousands who spring up on its surface. Accordingly, we find that vast numbers of the poor people are in the condition of many of those with us who go to sea; they cannot get their bread on shore, and, therefore, are obliged to live upon

water. The inland lakes are covered, while the rivers swarm with the miserable habitations of half-starved wretches. There is little doubt but that the greater number of these poor people live upon such fish as they are able to catch, or skim the surface of the water for whatever may be floating thereon. It has been shown in what manner the fishing-stakes block up the channels of the Tigris, and the same is to be observed throughout the empire. The avidity with which the few grains of rice spilled during the delivery of a cargo are sought after, is sufficient to show that even this commodity is a scarce article of consumption among them. The fishermen are represented as such a numerous and powerful body, as frequently to set the laws at defiance, and they are, in general, subject to no tax whatever on account of their well-known miserable condition.

These statements are sufficient to show, that the land is in the very highest state of cultivation, and yet that the population is greater than it is able to support. A few other circumstances have yet to be mentioned, which I think tend to confirm and strengthen this opinion. In the first place, emigration is going forward to a considerable extent at different times throughout

the year. Great colonies of Chinese are to be found at Siam, Cambodia, Singapore, Tonquin, Cochin-China, and various places in the Straits of Malacca. The Chin-tcheou men likewise people Formosa and Hainan, and even the barren Piscadores. This way of getting rid of the superfluity of the population is contrary to the laws, but still it takes place to a great extent in the native junks which belong to the coasts of Quan-tung and Fokien.

There is another plan of preventing the too rapid increase of the people, which is allowed by the government, and practised to a very considerable extent. This is infanticide; a species of crime which is held in universal horror by most other nations, and which we may well suppose would never have been adopted here, but under the most desperate circumstances. It is directly contrary to the finest and most tender feelings of our nature; it saps the foundation of social love and tears the bonds of humanity and generosity, when the unprotected helpless babe is deserted by the mother who has borne it. The only justification which can be imagined for such a practice, is the apparent necessity. Either parent or child must perish for want of the necessaries of life, and it is con-

sidered in this country that the offspring should be made the sacrifice, as reverence to parents is the fundamental principle upon which this vast family is knit together in the bonds of society. It is impossible to tell with certainty how many infants fall a sacrifice every year, for it must vary with the seasons of plenty and scarcity. The people are encouraged to desert their newly-born infants when they find that they have not sufficient to support them, and thus it is we find so many tiny skeletons among the large ones, in those places which are devoted to the burial of the poor. The mother will there lay aside all parental affection, and carry the infant to the ground, leaving it without casting a look behind, or listening to its last plaintive moan. Female children are, in general, the sufferers by this unnatural custom, as the fair sex is, somehow or other, unaccountably held at a discount in this singular country.

The importation of rice bears again upon this question, as it shows that the resources of the land itself are not sufficient for the wants of the people. Great encouragement is given to the importation of this commodity by the authorities. Every ship which comes into port with a cargo of rice is exempted from the

usual port-charges, so that it is a very common practice for Americans, and sometimes our East Indiamen, to call for a cargo at Manilla on their way to Whampoa. Batavia and latterly Singapore have furnished ship-loads also of this staff of life, so that in the year 1834 no less than 22,818 tons of rice were imported into China by British and American vessels. This liberal policy on the part of the government of the Celestial Empire produces the most beneficial effects; as this branch of trade is likely to be increased to an almost illimitable extent, and thus in time to be of sufficient importance to prevent the consequences of the dreadful famines, arising from too much or too little water, or the destruction of the tender plant by myriads of locusts.

No plan, however excellent, has yet been found which has not its corresponding disadvantages. The importation of rice under the present regulations is the vehicle of many underhand transactions, by which the revenue from foreign commerce is materially lessened.

Most of these latter circumstances are opposed to what may be observed in India. In that country the population is very great, but the number is not so enormous as to oblige the

government or the people to have recourse to such extraordinary expedients, as we have mentioned. Neither infanticide nor emigration is resorted to as a means of lessening the number of the people, or is there need of importation to increase the supplies. On the contrary, almost every ship which leaves India carries away a certain number of tons of rice, and the markets of Europe are chiefly supplied from that quarter. This grain, which is the general food of the natives, and often the only one, must therefore be in greater abundance than is required by the people, and in this particular it forms a striking contrast to China, where all means are taken to secure a larger quantity than the ground of the country itself produces. Besides, we cannot suppose that Hindostan is more productive than the other country, as it is subject to the same mountainous tracts and has as extensive swamps and morasses. Allowing that the nature of the soil is the same, it cannot be denied that the Chinese turn it to much more advantage. They are a more ingenious race of people, and their industry and prudence are highly conspicuous.

There is one single fact which would of itself be sufficient to show the difference that exists

between the natives of Hindostan and of China, with regard to the supply of sustenance in the two countries. This is the kind of food which is eaten by the two people. Setting aside the peculiar customs enjoined by religion, which I suppose would not stand out long against the cravings of the stomach, we find that the Indians are the most particular race of people on the earth with regard to the kind and cleanliness of their food. Rice is in general the only pabulum, and even this will not be eaten, if it has been touched by an individual of any other caste than that to which the proper owner belongs. The poor Chinese, on the contrary, eat whatever they can get hold of, and care little whether it be clean or dirty. They scoop the rice off the surface of dirty streams, and mix it with vegetables which are often the refuse of the more wealthy. Every kind of fish which they can catch, every animal, dead or alive, of which they can get possession, cats, dogs, rats, hawks, owls, and serpents, are boiled in a common pot and are served out at table as an olla podrida. We cannot suppose that these viands are eaten from choice, or that, as some people have asserted, the Chinese are perfectly indifferent on the subject. They feel the neces-

sity of placing something inside which will sooth the gnawing pangs of hunger, and they take whatever will produce this effect, in the same way that a person really sick swallows his medicine with eagerness and apparent satisfaction. The upper classes in China are as fastidious and difficult to be pleased as any other great people, and lay out large sums of money on the pleasures of the table. Thus, we find the grandees feasting on their soups and jellies, the middle classes regaling on the flesh of hogs and ducks, while the poor Chinaman has to feed himself upon fish, and the offal and refuse of his superiors.

Taking everything into consideration, it appears highly probable that China contains a much more dense population then Bengal. The latter country is well known, and therefore the number of persons who reside in it can be estimated with considerable accuracy. By the statement mentioned above, Mr. Hamilton allows to this region 328,000 square miles, and 57,000,000 inhabitants. According to Sir George Staunton, the area of the Empire of China may be taken at 1,300,000 square miles; and if this rate of population is extended to it we shall obtain nearly 228,000,000. Believing

this calculation by analogy to be inaccurate for the reasons mentioned above, we should be more inclined to believe that the account brought back by Lord Macartney from his embassy to the Court at Pekin was not at all exaggerated.

That nobleman received, as is well known, from Chow-ta-zhin, the mandarin who attended him in 1793, a statement taken from one of the public offices in the capital. This man appears to have been a person of great intelligence and respectability, and possessed of all the precision and accuracy of calculation for which the Chinese are so famous. According to his account, the population of the Empire amounted to 333,000,000. The latest statistical account may perhaps be a little above the mark, as the generality are below it. It is that of Mr. John Robert Morrison mentioned above, of 360,443,000.

Whatever may be the opinion of individuals with regard to the credit due to these estimates, by the very lowest computation a mass of human beings appear to be collected together in a single bond of society, much greater than any with which the world has ever before been acquainted. One government and one code of laws serve to keep this immense family

together in the bonds of the strictest fellowship. Great crimes are very rarely perpetrated, and there is as little roguery committed in any portion of this extensive region, as in any petty state of Europe which is governed by the most watchful care. The institutions of such a country are not, therefore, to be despised, especially when we know that they have continued unchanged for hundreds of years; have served to rear up a gradually increasing and now enormous population, to bring to perfection a system of agriculture the most likely to answer the demands of the people; and which have been respected even by the conquerors of the country, and in their hands have served to keep the Empire in a state of profound peace, and of steadily increasing prosperity.

CHAPTER II.

Outside shopkeepers of Canton—Oppression by mandarins—Secondary imposts—Dealings with foreigners—Spanish dollars — Opium trade — Native weights— The Taël—Candareen — Mace — The Tchen — Strings of money—Scales for heavy weights—Ivory balance and case—Weights—Taël—Catty—Pecul—China Street—Native females — Helpless gait — Process of forming small feet—Origin of the custom—Not adopted by the Tartars—Sedans of Hong merchants — Houses—Arrangement of shops—Warehouse of mixed goods—Butterflies and insects—Toys—Fireworks—Character of tradesmen — The Cumshaw—Tea-drinking—The chop.

THOSE who have travelled into the interior of China, and others who have gone to the northward along the coast in the Amherst and Sylph, found but little difference between the shops in the great cities frequented by the natives alone, and those which are expressly intended for traffic with foreigners without the walls of Canton. The outside shopkeepers are

limited to a certain number, and pay considerably to the authorities for the privilege. Frequently, as with the Hong merchants, they are obliged to take the station, however disinclined they may be, and altogether their position is very far from enviable. They are watched very closely by the mandarins, and, if the latter can discover the least fault or misdemeanor in them, they are taken up and squeezed out of a sum of money. The jealous eye of the government is constantly directed towards them, as they are often suspected of being friends of the Fan-quis, and favouring their interests too much. Some of them amass great wealth, but are obliged to keep it secret, lest they should be despoiled of it on some pretext or other by their rapacious overseers.

There is very little doubt that the inferior mandarins of Canton are the most corrupt of all classes in China, as they have the people entirely under their control without the possibility of an appeal. Nothing can show their power better than the way in which they hold their office. Very little and often no salary is assigned to them by the government, but they frequently pay a sum of money for the appointment. They, therefore, take the office as a matter of

speculation, and consider themselves justified in making all they can by their temporary authority. This is a defect in the legislature of this immense empire which gives rise to the most abominable abuses. The greatest crimes, with the exception of those in which life is concerned, may often be hushed up by paying a sum of money, and feeing the mandarins in proportion to their rank. It is through their connivance that the greater part of the smuggling transactions are carried on, the duties going into the pockets of the viceroy and hoppo, instead of into the imperial treasury.

As this has become by constant practice an established usage, the shopkeepers and others frequently try to evade these secondary imposts, in the same manner as they would those which originated in a legal manner. The oppression of the mandarins is sometimes so great, and the sums extorted so large for conniving at the contraband trade, that it frequently induces the petty merchants to run the risk of trusting to their good luck in avoiding all duty whatever. When any affair of this kind is discovered, the mandarins make a great show of activity and punish the offender in a very severe manner, partly for the offence against the laws of the

country, but more particularly for the wrong done to their own individual interests.

Under such circumstances, it is not surprising if we should find the shopkeepers a crafty, designing race of men, as they have a great many hardships to undergo. They have been frequently described as more than commonly dishonest in their dealings with foreigners, trying to cheat them on every occasion. For my part, I must confess that they did not appear to me in a worse light than many of the same class in other parts of the world. Their object is to get as much money as possible from their customers for their goods, and they are not more scrupulous than others in overrating their qualities. They have to deal besides with a people whom they are taught to despise, and, therefore, cannot consider themselves bound by any ties of honour to behave with justice and propriety. The strangers, too, frequently treat them with a great deal of suspicion and rudeness, and sometimes leave the place without settling their accounts. No justice can be obtained from the authorities under the latter circumstances; especially if the transaction has been conducted at all contrary to the laws. They have, there-

fore, to do with, on the one hand the foreigners in whom they cannot repose confidence, and on the other their native superiors, who are watching every opportunity of despoiling them of their gains; and who force them, by their ordinary exactions, to raise money in almost every way they are able.

The ordinary coin made use of in the traffic with foreigners at Canton is the Spanish dollar. Great quantities are brought hither to exchange for the native productions, on account of the difficulty of finding out commodities which the Chinese are in want of, in sufficient quantities to make a suitable exchange. This is a defect in the fair trade which it is to be hoped is becoming every year less apparent, but at present the exports are of greater value than the imports. The opium trade has increased, however, so very much within a short period lately, that the value of that commodity alone rather exceeds that of the tea exported. When the dollars first come over, they are frequently of a new coinage but always smooth and fit for circulation in Europe. In a short time after arrival, they are completely altered, and if taken back in that state would be of very diminished value. In China, you find them flattened out, and beaten in such a manner

[illegible]

[illegible] dollars have only a single star or cross upon them and are then not much injured, while others are so battered that they are not passable. It is not unfrequent for a Chinese tradesman after you have agreed to give him so many dollars for his goods, to insist upon receiving "number one, first-chop dollar," or else he will not stand by his bargain. There are but very few half or quarter dollars in circulation, so that when one of these coins is wanted to settle

the difference of an account, a piece of one of the battered veterans is broken off as near to the sum required as possible. These morsels will not pass current afterwards, but serve to put in the scales when the silver is estimated by the weight.

Although the dollar is the current coin in the small traffic between the shopkeepers and the foreigners, all articles of real merchandise are bargained for by the taël. This is a native weight, equivalent to 1⅓ oz. of our avoirdupois. The duties and cumshaws paid to the government are referred to this standard, as it is somewhat like the rupee of India or the franc of France, the most universal estimate of value. The taël of silver is equal in value to ten mace, and each mace to ten candareen, and one of the latter to the same number of cash. These are the names which foreigners have given to the native weights of the Leang, the Tseen, the Fun, and the Le, as more consonant to their European mode of pronunciation.

The cash or tchen is a coin of the most trifling value of any in circulation in any country, even that of the nominal pie of India, as it is only equal to a twelfth part of an English penny. It is composed of an alloy of copper and zinc, and is small and round

with a square hole cut in the centre. The tchen being the only coin in circulation in China, varies considerably in its value with relation to the taël. There is a mint for their coinage in each of the provinces, and they bear inscriptions by which you are able to ascertain the name of the emperor at the time they were issued. The candareen and the mace are merely nominal, as there is no coin to represent them, but a certain number of the cash are strung together on a piece of reed. A Chinaman is generally seen going to market, with a mace hanging from one of his fingers. This weighty piece of money consists of a hundred of the cash strung together and tied in a circle, and is so very bulky for conveyance, that a person would very soon get tired of his money if he had to carry it to any considerable distance.

The scales of the Chinese are on the same principle as our steelyards, but whether they borrowed the idea from us or we from them, it is impossible to say. It is most probable, however, that both hit upon the same idea independently of the other. They consist of a straight stick, made of a hard and dark wood, rather thicker at one end than at the other, and

about a yard long. At a short distance from the thick end two holes are bored, through which strings are passed, with knots on the end for the handles. Close to the same extremity another string is fixed, from which hangs the hook upon which the article to be weighed is fastened. A small weight is then passed along the thinner extremity, as far as required from the fulcrum or handle. There is nothing different in this part from the same machine in Europe, with the exception of the simplicity of the construction, being made of wood and string instead of iron and steel. The way of marking it is the only peculiarity, and shows the pains which these people will take in ornamenting instruments of very trifling value. Instead of notching the beam at the proper places, as would be done by one of the children of the west, small brass brads are knocked into it a line or two apart from each other, forming circles round the stick. Straight marks made in the same way, connect the circles together in some places, while flowers and other ornaments, formed with these shining dots, are seen at the extremities. When the brass pins have been filed off even with the wood and the whole polished, it looks very well;

and considering that this instrument is intended to weigh meat, or bags of sweet potatoes, a great deal of trouble appears to be thrown away.

The native doctors and others, who require to be nice in their operations, make use of a smaller pair of scales, made on the same principle but in a much neater manner. The beam is of tapering ivory, about eight inches long, and marked in a beautiful manner with studs of gold or silver. A small scale here takes the place of the hook, while the fastenings of the handle and weight are made of bright-coloured silk. The little case in which these scales are placed, when they are not required for use, is not the least compact part of the apparatus. A piece of wood is fitted to receive the round pan at one end, while it tapers off to a point at the other extremity, affording just room enough to receive the beam in a groove in the middle. A corresponding piece turns upon a pivot at the thick end for the cover, and when the box is thus closed, a small ring made of knotted silk is run upon the round tapering portion, so as to form a very excellent fastening.

After mentioning the scales, it may be as

well to say a few words about the weights used for ordinary purposes. There are no separate measures for liquids, and in fact no measures of capacity at all, every thing being weighed. The weights are the same as the moneys mentioned above as high as the taël, when we find that sixteen taël make one catty, and one hundred catties make a pecul. These two latter denominations have a degree of relative similarity to our pound and hundredweight, the one being about 20 ounces and the other 133⅓ lb. No greater weight than the pecul is used in China, and by it are sold those immense quantities of tea and silk which are exported every year from that country.

The two best streets in the outside city at Canton, the Old and New China streets, have a degree of resemblance to our arcades. They are not entirely protected, however, from the weather, being only partially covered overhead by buildings which stretch across from one side of the way to the other. They are paved pretty regularly with flags of stone, and may be about five or six yards in width. They are kept in very good order and tolerably quiet, as they are both wider and have not so many coolies passing through with their goods

on their shoulders as the other streets beyond the factories. The passengers, in general, consist of foreigners, and natives of the male sex connected with the shops. Very few women, even of the lower orders, are to be seen in the streets. Sometimes, you may observe one or two old women toddling about and staring at the strangers.

The curious Chinese custom of forcing the feet of the members of the fair sex into their distorted and unnatural shape, is not of great advantage to them when they walk abroad. It appears very ridiculous to European eyes, to see an old lady, verging into dotage, believing all eyes are turned upon her in admiration, because her feet are no larger than those of a child five or six years of age. As she walks through the streets, her progressive motion would incline you to believe that she had had the misfortune to lose both her legs, and was obliged to get about as well as she was able on a couple of wooden stumps. You feel a great temptation to go up and offer the old lady the use of your stick to help her along, as she seems in danger of falling every moment. In this tottering manner they proceed, and, if they wish to look behind them, they are obliged to stop and then

steady themselves, while they gradually twist the whole body round as far as required. This feeble, helpless condition of the females is very much admired by the Chinese, who delight to see them in danger of falling. The women themselves make it one of their principal arts of attraction to endeavour to walk, and thus show their dependent situation. This is very similar to the affected grace of some of our European damoiselles, who often exaggerate their natural timidity in order to rouse the protecting courage of the lords of the creation.

This plan of curtailing and distorting a part of the human figure is somewhat on a par with the practice of the same people in wrinkling and dwarfing forest trees; or that of the natives of the islands, of tattooing and painting their bodies. It is entirely a matter of taste. The same fashion, which leads the people at one end of the world to consider a small waist the height of female elegance, leads those of the other to prize a diminutive foot. When these notions are carried to the extreme, and violent means are used to check the course of nature, what would otherwise have been an elegance becomes a deformity, and the gentle curve of nature is exchanged for the straight and stub-

born line of art. Both these fashions when carried too far are very unsightly, and are highly injurious to health. The pain which the Chinese beauty must suffer before her charms can be brought to perfection must be extreme, and can only be compared to the agonies of those compelled to wear that instrument of torture, formerly used in Scotland, called *the boot.*

Very soon after the birth of a Chinese maiden of the upper rank, it is the duty of the parent to turn the toes of her child under the foot, and then bandage the whole very tightly together. This binding is renewed every day, and is not removed during the night, however painful or inflamed the joint may be. As the foot is growing all this time, a constant pressure is kept up against the bindings, producing a degree of agony which it would be difficult for us to conceive. Those who are blessed with a pair of tight shoes or boots, just come from the makers, can form a faint estimate of the sensation they must experience. In process of time, after years of suffering, the growth of the part ceases, and the toes become of one piece with the rest of the foot, leaving the lower extremity very similar in appearance to that of a club foot.

When you examine an old Chinese lady, it appears as if that part of the instep near the toes had been cut off, and the rest of the soft parts in the vicinity brought together in a lump, in order to form a good cushion to the stump. Our western notions are somewhat startled at this odd custom, and we inquire in vain how it is possible to discover beauty in this disgusting spectacle. But every man to his taste. It appears to have been in practice among the upper classes in the Celestial Empire for many centuries. The cause of this singular practice is completely veiled in obscurity, but we know that it originated towards the close of the ninth century, near the termination of the dynasty of Tâng. In the absence of any information on the subject, the following speculation may perhaps be allowed:—It is a matter of history, that during the reign of the emperors of the Tâng dynasty the power of the women and eunuchs had arrived at its greatest height, and that the ill effects of their interference in the affairs of government were severely felt. Great efforts were, therefore, made to overthrow their authority, which in the end completely succeeded. The eunuchs were either destroyed or banished the court, and the ladies disgraced.

We may suppose, that in order to debar the latter in future from interference in state matters, and to render their fancied incapacity more apparent, the practice of retarding the growth of the foot was instituted. If such were its origin, I should think that it must fully answer the intention. The constant personal suffering endured, must necessarily prevent the cultivation of the mind, while the helpless condition of the beauty must render her an object rather of pity than of fear, if she should aim to tread the rugged path of ambition. In process of time, these distorted members were admired, and now, forsooth, they bear the name of "The Golden Lilies." This is one of the few customs which have not been adopted by the Tartar conquerors, their ladies still wearing their feet as formed by nature.

In the streets, you are occasionally passed by the carriages of the Hong merchants. They are very similar in shape to our sedan-chairs, but are much more highly ornamented. They are borne by means of long poles upon the shoulders of coolies, who trot along with their burden at a tolerably quick rate, making a noise as they proceed for the purpose of clearing the way. Within, in an upright position, is the

privileged merchant, with an appearance of great gravity and integrity in his countenance. They are, in general, a worthy set of men, and, considering the difficult situation in which they are placed, have conducted themselves with propriety, and often gained the entire confidence and friendship of the foreigners. Their carriages have frequently been the bone of contention between the resident merchants and the local authorities. With the characteristic jealousy of the Chinese government, no foreigner is allowed to ride in one of them, or to use any other kind of carriage whatever. Even the President of the Select Committee, in the Company's time, was refused this privilege, although it formed one of the articles in several of the petitions which were sent to the viceroy. Perhaps it was a subject not worth creating a disturbance about, but it would have been better if this point could have been gained, as it would have added considerable importance to our merchants in the eyes of the natives, whereas at present they must seem very inferior to those of the Hong. This policy is, however, of a piece with their plan of proceedings towards the Europeans, whom they feign to consider a troublesome, intruding race of

people, of very little importance even in their own country, and of no service whatever to the "black-haired race."

The houses are connected together in Chinese towns in the same way as with us, and the doors of the shops open into the streets in a regular manner. In the cities to the northward, long poles project from the houses, bearing flags with inscriptions of the name and trade of the inhabitant. Nothing of the kind is seen at Canton, and little ornament or show is made in front of the shops. In China Street, there is merely a small black board fastened up, containing the name and occupation of the tradesman and some account of the goods to be found within. There is no particular arrangement of the shops in the two principal streets, those which are most frequented by visitors containing chow-chow articles; that is, a mixture or assortment of all those which are in most general demand by new-comers. Others are devoted to the sale of some particular class of goods, or for the exercise of some one art. Thus, there are the dealers in lacker-ware, the ivory carvers and turners, the silversmiths, &c., and a great number for the residence of artists and colourmen.

When you push open the door and enter one of these stores, a general warehouse for instance, you are welcomed by the master of the house or one of his numerous partners. He usually salutes you with, "How you do?" "I like werry much do littee pidgeon long you." Upon walking in, you find a long room, sometimes partially divided into two or three chambers by wainscoting. At the farther end, is a small counter, behind which stands the master of the shop, having the Chinese slate and the materials for writing before him. Five or six coolies are, generally, in attendance, to bring down and show the goods, and to pack them up and run away with them to the boat when they are sold.

Around the room forms are arranged along the walls, while chairs are placed in convenient corners. Every other part is crowded with goods, as the sale being, in general, very rapid a large stock is required. Neatly-made shelves are fastened around the apartment from the top to the bottom, while the more bulky articles are piled in an orderly manner in the recesses and unfrequented corners. The more valuable and delicate works of art are placed on shelves in glass cases, arranged against the

walls at the back part of the shop, while small drawers and cupboards are filled with fancy articles of turnery.

Upon hearing the usual question, "What thing you wantshee?" you turn round to look more particularly at the different articles arranged round the shop. To the stranger, who has never visited the place before, a more interesting or novel sight could hardly be presented. Almost every thing is new to him; and, as he passes from one object to another, the source of delight seems as if it would be inexhaustible.

There is such a peculiarity, such a neatness and ingenuity about every thing made by the Chinese, that a European feels in the situation of a child, taken, for the first time in his life, into a large toy-shop containing what he considers a world of wonders. One object after another is taken up and examined and thought well worthy of bearing home, but is quickly eclipsed by the next thing which comes to hand. On the first visit to these shops, scarcely any purchase is made, because you feel a desire to possess the whole. As soon as you have selected what you think most curious, and laid the articles on one side with the intention of

bargaining for them, you look round to see if there is any thing else you would like to add to the number. No search is required, to enable you to find more articles totally different from those which you had seen before, and equally worthy of your choice. Thus you go on, until all your time is wasted without having purchased any thing, and you retire with the intention of calling again.

In addition to the various specimens of carving in ivory and wood, drawings, lackered ware, silks, crapes, &c., which are to be found in the other shops more particularly devoted to one branch of trade, these general warehouses contain some things which you cannot get elsewhere. Among these may be mentioned the boxes of insects, brought from the interior of the province where they are collected. Great care is taken in the preservation of these little animals, as the bodies of the larger ones are hollowed and stuffed with an aromatic powder. The boxes are, in addition, made of camphor-wood, and lumps of that substance are fastened within. The greater number of these beautiful insects are collected at a mountain to the eastward of Canton, called Lo-fow-shan, where they abound, and render the neighbourhood delight-

ful by the brilliancy of their colours. The Chinese themselves are great admirers of them, but do not study or arrange them scientifically. This may account for the way in which they are placed in the boxes, to please the eye alone.

Mixed boxes of toys and other playthings for children are shown, and are remarkably cheap. The ingenuity of the Chinese is particularly exerted in articles of this nature, which are prized very much in other countries. These people take so much more pains than others in perfecting an article of the most trifling value at the end of their labour, that even these goods are very much superior to the tawdry, painted rubbish of the same kind generally found in Europe. Some of the toys seen here are of a very superior kind, and, on account of their elaborate workmanship and curious machinery, might well serve to afford amusement to the child of older growth. In no country in the world do the natives seem better to understand the truth of the maxim, "That which is worth doing at all, is worth doing well."

The fireworks, too, are considered very excellent of their kind. Large boxes of these

combustibles are put up for immediate disposal. The gunpowder of the Chinese is not very good, and therefore there is not a great deal of power in their fireworks. Neither can they be supposed to equal those of the West in the grandeur and magnificence of the display, although some very excellent exhibitions of this kind were witnessed by those who travelled into the interior. But while they are deficient in strength and force of effect they are still very curiously constructed, and are much more ingenious in their adaptation than those of any other nation. Mimic carriages and animals are made to be propelled by them, while ships, ducks, and fish, are driven across the surface of the water by these fiery agents.

One of the best of the Chinese fireworks is called a *drum* by the English on account of its shape, being similar to one of our national instruments of music. It consists of a cylindrical case, in which is contained a number of figures folded into a small compass, and so contrived as to drop in succession on strings, and remain suspended in motion during the explosion of the various fireworks contained within the cylinder. The Chinese are particularly fond of these exhibitions, and introduce them into

many of their ceremonies. It has been shown that the firing of hundreds of crackers forms one of the most important parts of their religious duties. They say this is done to appease the devil, and certainly it appears as if this would be the kind of homage most congenial to the warm feelings of his Satanic majesty. These little popguns are sold in the shops, done up in packages containing a hundred in each, and are manufactured so that the whole may be exploded in succession, by lighting one of the extremities.

The Chinese, without the walls of Canton, make as good shopkeepers as are to be found in any part of the world. The business which can be transacted by them in a short space of time is truly astonishing. Every thing is arranged in excellent order, always ready to be got at in a moment, and not a single article is mislaid or neglected. They take the greatest pains to please, and are always ready to show their goods, even if you have no intention of purchasing.

Those shopkeepers who have never been detected in trying to cheat their customers get a good name among the foreigners, and are recommended by them to the new comers. Some

of them are very punctilious in executing orders in an honourable manner, that they may not "*lose face*" as they call it. So very prevalent, however, is the system of cheating, not only the foreigners which they consider a praiseworthy action, but even their own countrymen, that it is not at all uncommon for the words, "Pou-hoa," to be written over a door in large characters, and this is intended as a particular attraction to the passers-by, as it means, "No cheating here."

When you have selected the articles that you intend to purchase, the shopkeeper runs up the amount in a moment upon his swan-pan, and then the bargain is soon completed. When you have settled the affair, the shopmen and coolies set to work to pack up and arrange the goods ready to send away, and it is astonishing with what rapidity this is done. These people never make any extra charge for the packages which are required, but are most liberal in giving proper boxes and cases for even the smallest articles. These envelopes are often very curious of themselves, and are always made in a very neat manner.

One of the most curious circumstances connected with our dealings with the Chinese re-

mains yet to be mentioned. It is their custom of giving a cumshaw, or present, to any person who pays a bill. In Europe, servants often receive a trifle when they settle the accounts of their masters with the tradesmen, and in India this is so regular a practice, that an anna in the rupee is what is called the *custom*, or regular due of the attendant when you pay money in his presence. In China, however, when you have settled a bargain, and run the shopkeeper as close as you can in making the most advantageous terms for yourself, he still expects you will demand a cumshaw before you pay the money. It is very probable that they manage matters so as to be able to afford this little deduction, but it is certain that it is very rarely refused when it is demanded. When the money is given, the customer looks round and selects some article from among the curiosities, of a value proportionate to that of the goods which he has been purchasing. This, if approved of by the shopkeeper, is added to the rest and sent home for you. Generally speaking, the value of the cumshaw is about five per cent. on the bill paid; but sometimes, when a hundred or two of dollars are paid at one time, eight and even ten per cent. is allowed. This

singular practice seems to be universal in this country, as a cumshaw is always given by the party obliged whenever a favour is granted. Thus it forms one of the items in the bill of port-charges, the cumshaw paid by most vessels being more than two thousand dollars each for the liberty of trading. It has been mentioned that the tailors and other tradesmen have to pay this duty largely to their customers, and the compradores must be at some expense on this account every time a ship leaves, as they give cumshaws to every one on board according to their station.

As soon as you enter a shop, and have taken your seat in order to commence business with the tradesman, a teapot and two or three little cups are brought in by an attendant and placed on the counter. You are then invited to join in sipping this pleasant and refreshing liquor, which is handed to you as a common civility, in the same way as a Frenchman would offer his snuff-box or a Turk his pipe. Having settled all the "pidgeon," and paid for the goods, a chop is written out for them by the master of the house, and they are sent away to your lodgings or your boat. The chop is a piece of paper or note, containing a list of the

wares, and stating that the duty is paid upon them. This answers for a permit, and is always carried down with the goods to the watering-place, where there is a mandarin stationed for the purpose of inspecting it.

CHAPTER III.

Isolated state of the Chinese—Discovery of fire—Uncertainty of original discoveries — Gunpowder—Mariner's compass — Chinese injustice — Vaccination — Minor branches of art—Lacker-ware shops—Caution of the natives — General use of fans — Native customers—Their quiet, inoffensive behaviour—Operation of varnishing—Collecting the resin—The varnish-tree—Real Japan-ware—Chinese muster—Ivory carving—Sphere within sphere—Ho-shing—The skill of the carver—Ivory market—Tortoiseshell and Mother-o'-pearl—Sandal-wood—Black woods—Roots of bamboo—Pleasure derived from the wonderful—The figure-stone—Porcelain shops—Porcelain trade—Superiority of Chinese porcelain—Old and new ware—Manufacture of large pieces—The city of King-tse-tching.

PLACED at the most distant part of the world from that which we have always been accustomed to consider the centre of civilization, and bound by prejudice and vanity, barriers far more difficult to be overcome than

mountains tipped with perpetual snow, or stormy oceans, the Chinese appear to form a distinct race of themselves, and to have risen and increased in numbers and refinement like the beings of another planet. Although it is certain, that in former ages no such severe restrictions upon foreign intercourse were imposed as are now found to exist, yet there is little doubt that there never has been any very free communication between China and the kingdoms of the West. The learned Dr. Morrison's opinion on this subject is as follows:—"Whether the ancient inhabitants of Europe had any knowledge of China or not is very problematical. There has been an endeavour to prove that the Greeks and Chinese had some intercourse, as the doctrine of the metempsychosis was common to both. Rome had, no doubt, a second or third hand intercourse with China, and rumours and traditions must have been heard in the west concerning it."*

In the earliest times, eras of which no mention is made in our chronicles, the Chinese appear to have commenced the world without the slightest assistance from any other

* Miscellany, p. 44.

nation. Whether they were originally a colony from Egypt or a tribe from Hindostan, they must have carried very little information with them on their route. The simple fact, as recorded, of their having lived many centuries without the use, and even without the knowledge, of fire, and of having then discovered it by an accidental operation of nature, would be sufficient to prove this. In later times, it may be more a matter of doubt what assistance they have received from the discoveries of Europe, or how far we are indebted to them for many of those things which we consider original inventions. The knowledge of gunpowder, for instance, which had been in use in China many centuries before it was known in Europe, may have found its way hither by means of the Arabians, who formerly carried on an extensive traffic to that country. The mariner's compass too, has with great probability travelled westward in a similar manner.

The Chinese custom of adopting the discoveries of other people and promulgating them as their own is well known, and is in a great measure caused by their overweening self-esteem, causing them to consider that nothing excellent could originate among wild and unlettered barbarians. When, by the philanthropic exertions

of Mr. Pearson, the Chinese had adopted the plan of vaccination as a preventative of the smallpox, it was Dr. Morrison, I believe, who published a small tract in Chinese, containing an account of the benefits to be derived from this valuable agent, and detailing the plan of operation necessary to ensure success. Very shortly afterwards a new edition of this pamphlet was issued by a native publisher, making it appear that the discovery had been made in the Celestial Empire, and making not the slightest allusion to the gentleman who had introduced it from Europe.

Uncertain as we may be as to the claims of the Chinese to original knowledge on great and important subjects, it has never been denied that they have long possessed many curious and useful branches of art, in which they have greatly excelled, and in which their ingenuity is highly conspicuous. Most of these have been introduced into Europe, and, although brought to a considerable degree of excellence, are still generally allowed to be inferior to the workmanship of their original inventors. It forms the principal amusement of the visitor to Canton to walk through the streets, and to examine the

singular productions which are displayed in the shops.

In the minor branches of national industry, in those arts which tend to ornament and enliven society, the Chinese have arrived at a considerable degree of excellence, but in a totally different style from that of the other end of the world. In works where great ingenuity and untiring patience are required to ensure success, these people have rarely been excelled; while their delicacy of touch and minuteness of detail could scarcely have been expected from the inferiority which is observed in their instruments of labour.

As we have seen the general appearance of China Street, and the way in which business is conducted in the shops, particularly those for the sale of mixed goods, it will be as well now to proceed to a few of those where one line of business alone is carried on. As we walk down the street, looking into the open doors on each side, our eyes are particularly dazzled by the shining glitter of the lacker-ware, ranged along each side of the passages which lead to the farther extremity of the shop. Upon stopping to look at these splendid orna-

ments, we cannot but be struck with the vast superiority of their workmanship over those imitations manufactured in Europe, especially as we see them in Canton fresh from the hands of their makers, and undamaged by the salt and watery air of the sea, which it is almost impossible to exclude from them during the tedious voyage to Europe.

The shops containing these articles are fitted up very nearly in the same manner as the others. Shelves and glass cases are arranged round the walls, while the larger articles of furniture, such as tables and cabinets, are placed upon the ground. Some of these latter wares the tradesman pretends to set great value on, and will not show them to you until you have asked repeatedly for "more number one chop;" that is, something better than the last. He then goes and shuts the street-door, as if he was afraid of the passers-by seeing his valuables. This is a common trick, done for the purpose of giving you a high opinion of what you may be going to see, and in order to prevent the neighbours spoiling the market. Another cause has suggested itself to me for this carefulness on the part of the shopkeeper. The door may be shut to prevent your running away with the

goods. Young midshipmen have, occasionally, taken up a table for the sake of the jest, and actually succeeded in carrying it to their hotels in spite of the opposition of crowds of natives. When all is snug, the shopkeeper uncovers the treasure, or brings it out of some secluded corner and places it in a good light for inspection. Some of these *chefs d'œuvre* are really very splendid, so rich in embroidered gold that scarcely a part of the black varnish is to be seen. The houses where these goods are manufactured are either within the city or in the back lanes behind the factories, and they are sent hither for sale. You can see the people at work upon them in the back streets, so that you can have those which you order made after any pattern you may choose.

Lackered fans are in very general use among the higher classes in China, and the men do not consider it at all effeminate to employ them on their own persons. In the native drawings and carvings, you will almost invariably find a gentleman with one of these fans in his hand, and even the clerks and linguists, who come down to Whampoa to deliver cargo, consider them essential to their comfort. In Canton, you may sometimes happen to be present

when one or two natives of rather superior rank will come into a shop to give an order for a fan. They bring the plain wooden leaves before they have received any coat of varnish, and with the pattern they prefer lightly etched upon it by themselves. These men conduct themselves in a very quiet, inoffensive manner, always wishing to give place to the strangers, and would even walk away altogether if you were to allow them. When the pattern is thus drawn out upon the wood, the varnish is laid on in successive coats until it acquires a sufficient degree of substance, when it receives the last polish from the hand.

The varnish is of a very irritating and destructive nature, as the men are very careful how they handle it lest it should come in contact with the skin. It is a liquid resin, which exudes from incisions made in the bark of a tree called *tsi*, which grows in the greatest perfection in the district of Kan-tcheou-fou, in the province of Kiang-see. This plant, about fifteen feet in height, has a resemblance to the ash. When it is about eight years of age, it is fit for yielding the juice, which runs into gourds placed beneath to receive it. So little can be collected at one time, that the night is consi-

dered a good one, when one thousand trees yield but twenty pounds of the varnish.

The Chinese originally derived this art from the Japanese, and even now import a considerable quantity of the manufactured articles from their islands. You will, therefore, find two kinds in the shops at Canton—those from abroad, and those made at home. The Chinese ware is more highly decorated with gold and figures in bass-relief, but that which is called the Japan muster has the varnish of a thicker and more brilliant quality. The Japan ware was formerly brought in ship-loads to England, but now, on account of the competition with our own manufactures, it is almost prohibited by a very heavy duty being imposed upon its importation.

Carving is one of the minor arts in which the Chinese particularly excel, and, assisted by their curious methods of turning, produces some of the most elegant and ingenious ornaments that are to be found in any part of the world. With all the talent which has been devoted to the subject, our workmen have not been able to compete with them in this particular. One kind of article more especially has excited a great deal of interest, on account of the pains

which have been taken to discover the way in which they are made. I mean those large balls of ivory cut in a beautiful manner, with from five to fifteen smaller spheres contained one within the other. These appear to be the true Chinese puzzles, which foil the efforts of the Fan-quis to discover the mode of constructing them. For a long time, it was supposed that there was some joint or other about them, by which they had been fastened together after the balls had been successively inserted; but this idea was quickly banished, when every means had been devised without success to discover where this invisible point of junction was situated. Not to give up the point without trying every thing which offered a chance of success, the ivory globes have been macerated and boiled for a considerable time in water, in hopes that the glue, or whatever cement might have been used, would be dissolved and thus give up its hold. Since this plan has failed, it appears to be perfectly settled that they must be the work of the turning lathe, but of the kind of instruments used for this purpose we have no conception. Many instruments have been made at Birmingham and elsewhere for

the purpose of imitating these curious trifles, but with a very indifferent degree of success.

Most of the other specimens of art in this line are well known in England, and may be bought almost as cheaply as in the country where they were manufactured; as the market has been for a long time overloaded. It is almost impossible to see them, however, in Canton, without feeling tempted to purchase; the workmanship is generally so elaborate. Ho-shing is the man who is most relied on by foreigners, on account of the splendid collection that he has to show. Some of the pagodas and baskets of ivory are made so thin and so delicately marked, that you are afraid to touch them lest they should fall to pieces in your hand. Strangers generally look with the greatest admiration at those parts which are cut into fine lines or threads, and which are evidently worked by the hand. The Chinese themselves consider that an inferior degree of merit is due to this part of the performance, but think that the great skill lies in carving the ivory as deeply as possible without cutting it through. Some of their card-cases exhibit this kind of workmanship in great perfection, as you there see two or three strata, if

you may so call them, of pictures one behind the other.

The supply of the Chinese market with ivory is almost entirely in the hands of the natives, who bring elephants' teeth in their junks from various places to which they trade, chiefly the islands in the Eastern Archipelago. After manufacturing the larger articles, no part of the material is thrown away. Every morsel is carefully preserved, and converted to a variety of useful purposes. The shavings in particular are highly useful, as they are woven with pieces of quill and made into baskets and hats, which are very light and flexible. The odd morsels are cut into tooth or ear picks, or are made available as fastenings for hair or trinket-boxes.

Ivory is not the only substance upon which the Chinese exercise their skill and ingenuity in minute workmanship. Canton is a kind of *entrepôt* for various productions of neighbouring countries, but particularly for those of the interior of China. Among these may be mentioned mother-o'-pearl and tortoiseshell, both very excellent substances for showing the skill of the carver. Although these materials do not compete with ivory in this particular, yet

some very elegant ornaments are made of them, by these ingenious people. Many kinds of wood are also subjected to their knife. Sandal-wood is often carved almost as delicately as ivory, and possesses nearly as much hardness and durability. Fans and card-cases made of this material are in high estimation on account of their fragrancy. It appears, that in the year 1834 the English and Americans imported as much as 300 tons of this commodity into China, equal in value to 50,000 Spanish dollars. The best and largest timber is brought from Malabar. It is nearly three times as valuable as that brought from the Sandwich and Feejee islands, and contains more essential oil. Some hard and dark woods, very similar to oak, are used, and most beautiful designs are sometimes executed on them. A favourite subject with them is a kind of boat, supported on a curiously-carved piece of bamboo, and having a great number of figures cut upon it, looking out in different directions from among trees and bushes.

These people are also famous for giving a fanciful construction to the chance designs of nature. Thus, whenever a bamboo or other tree is taken up by the roots, if this part is very

wrinkled and distorted, it is taken to particular men who are clever in these matters, and who give their opinion as to what may be made of it. This person points out the resemblance which he fancies to exist between the knots and projections and various natural objects. Under the direction of this sage the knife is applied, and very quickly the most singular figures are produced. Some of these roots are six or eight feet high, and when properly carved are very valuable, as they appear perfectly animated with curious devices. In some of them every projection grins with life, each monster appearing more horrible than its neighbour. The Chinese have a great idea of the marvellous; their imaginations often teem with ghosts and hobgoblins, and they appear to take a great pleasure in exhibiting these idealities, in grinning horror, whenever they can find an opportunity. We cannot wonder that the mandarins should find it convenient to have these dreadful images painted upon their shields or embroidered on their garments, as they are intended to strike terror into those who come before them; but it appears singular, that the common people should delight in having before their eyes those things which must constantly

produce a shudder. The sterns of the merchant junks are often ornamented in this manner. The pleasure or satisfaction they derive from beholding these unearthly images must be of the same kind as that which is excited on a winter's evening, when, collected round the fire, the country-people listen with satisfaction to some dismal story told by a person in a low and subdued tone of voice. Although each individual shudders as the narrative proceeds, and his anxious face is cast every moment over his shoulder as he creeps closer to his neighbour, still he feels the deepest interest, and would not lose a word of the story on any consideration. How singular it is, that the greatest pleasure should often be closely allied to the very excess of pain!

There is a mineral production which serves also to set their ingenuity in action. This is the agalmatholite or figure-stone, a native of the country. It is so soft that it can be cut with a knife, and thus the ideal sketches of nature worked into form. Realgar, or the sulphuret of arsenic, is also frequently cut into figures of men and women, which are then brought to this country as great curiosities. At the picture-shops, in the outside city of

Canton, there are usually a number of these carved works exposed for sale. Some of those made of stone are so hard that they would appear impenetrable to the chisel of the artist. But there are few things which will resist the industry and perseverance of a Chinese workman.

Although there is nothing peculiar in the appearance of the porcelain shops, yet it would be wrong to pass them over without saying a few words concerning the elegant articles which they contain. In former years, porcelain was the commodity which was almost the sole object of trade to this country, and was considered the most valuable of its products. Hence the term China-ware, applied, even now vulgarly to the finer specimens of pottery. Of later years, there has been a great deal of competition in Europe in the manufacture of the article, and a very considerable degree of perfection has been attained. Frederick the Great of Prussia took a great interest in this branch of industry, and instituted an extensive manufactory for it at Berlin. In most other countries of Europe the art has been encouraged, particularly in England. Notwithstanding these efforts, the porcelain of China is

considered superior to that of the rest of the world, although its exportation from that country is considerably diminished. The western nations borrowed the art from the Chinese, but have not, as it is often the case, excelled the masters who taught them. The quantity of this ware formerly sent to Europe was very great, but is now reduced to the value of eight or nine thousand pounds yearly. The Americans, however, take away to a much larger amount. In addition to the finer kind of porcelain required to supply these demands, a very considerable quantity of a coarser manufacture is sent to various places nearer home. Thus the greater part of the culinary utensils, required by the inhabitants of the Eastern Islands, and the eastern extremity of the Birman empire on the frontier of China, Siam, Cambodia, &c. are supplied by the Chinese junks, while great quantities are taken to Bombay by the country ships for the use of the Persians and Arabians.

In the shops at Canton, the porcelain is arranged on shelves and other convenient places about the room, in the same way as in England; but the show is much more magnificent. Splendid vases of enormous size attract the attention, by the richness and beauty of their

colouring, and pagodas, fountains, and waterfalls, by the ingenuity of their construction. Smaller pieces are to be seen having a curious construction within, such as those which imitate the intermitting fountain, or the wonders of the syphon. It is almost impossible to tell to what singular purposes the Chinese have not converted this semi-pellucid material. We know that pagodas, tables, chairs, shoes, &c. have been made of it, and that they have even tried its effect as the framework of instruments of music.

There are many reasons by which we may account for the superiority of the Chinese porcelain over that of other nations. Although the secrets of their process are pretty well known, yet it is almost impossible to procure the same materials elsewhere. Porcelain is nothing but clay, rendered capable of a degree of semi-fusion by the addition of some form of silex or flint. It is this latter which renders it so beautifully translucent; but it acts very differently, according to the nature of the clay with which it is mixed. In China there is a variety of this substance, of a nature so pure and fine that it surpasses that of the rest of the world in its fitness for this manufacture. A great deal of the success may

be attributed also to the pains and nicety used by these industrious people, in clearing it from every particle of dirt, or the smallest thread of hair. The colouring is another branch for which they are justly famous, and depends upon some peculiar art of their own which the curiosity of strangers has not yet fully developed.

It is a matter of question, whether the Chinese have improved of late years upon their process of manufacture. The oldest work is generally esteemed the most in our country, and is found to possess exquisite beauty in some instances, but its value is, of course, greatly enhanced by the knowledge of its antiquity. The Chinese themselves appear to estimate their porcelain in a great measure by this standard, and keep their "very olo" apart, and bring it out to view only when it is asked for. It also fetches a much higher price at Canton than that which has been lately made. With regard to the modern porcelain, the Chinese estimate it nearly in the same way as other people. A tea-cup, for instance, would be looked at to note its degree of fineness and transparency, the brilliancy of its colours, the drawing of the figures, and lastly, the thickness of the vessel itself. For their domestic

purposes, the modern Chinese prefer their porcelain made as thin as possible consistent with its strength, and often carry this so far as to make it no thicker than a wafer. This beautiful ware is called by them *egg-shell porcelain,* which probably has given rise to the idea that these animal exuviæ were actually employed as ingredients in their composition.

There is a peculiarity in the manufacture of large vases and immense plates, which is not generally known. The Chinese workmen cannot make them conveniently above a certain size, lest when the compost is put into the furnace to harden, it may be warped and blistered in such a manner by the heat, that the original shape will be entirely lost by the time it is taken out again. To avoid this, and at the same time to attain the object, smaller pieces are moulded to the proper shape, and when they have been hardened in the fire are fastened together. When the whole has been painted, and received its coat of glazing which gives it the lustre, it would require a very experienced person to point out the places where it has been joined. It is in this way that those large articles of porcelain, such as picture-frames,

vases, &c., which are so much esteemed in Europe, are formed.

Visitors, while they are remaining a few months at Canton, frequently give orders for porcelain to be made after some particular pattern. They sometimes show their taste by designing the figures and flowers themselves, and it is astonishing with what readiness and fidelity these orders are executed, and the more so because the Chinese have to send them to the interior, as there is no manufactory of fine porcelain in the province of Quan-tung.

The town where all the Chinese porcelain is made, the place which stocks the world with these elegant and beautiful wares, is situated in the province of Kiang-see. Although King-te-tching does not rank as a city, and is not surrounded by walls, it has been reported to contain a million of inhabitants. This account may perhaps be a little exaggerated, but not very much so, when we consider the importance of the place, and the vast quantity of goods which are there manufactured and sent forth to supply a very considerable branch of commerce.

The nature of the business transacted there, causes King-te-tching to appear in the distance

like a city on fire. Volumes of smoke roll upward and cover it during the day, while at night it seems like one grand furnace, glowing with fire and flame. It stands on a river, running through a plain environed by a chain of mountains. Down this stream the fabricated brittle ware is carried, and landed at Kan-tcheou-fou, which thus becomes an emporium. Still lower down it is carried to Nan-ngan-fou, where it is landed and conveyed over the high mountains into the province of Quan-tung.

One of the missionaries, who resided for some years at King-te-tching, has given a very detailed account of the manufacture of porcelain, and has thus considerably increased our knowledge on this subject.

The amount of factories appears to be about five hundred, and, as these give employment to the working part of a million of people, the number in each must be very considerable. Although the wages are exceedingly low, as is the price of labour universally throughout China, the capital invested in one of these potteries must be great, as the materials are brought from a considerable distance and are of themselves expensive. The principle of the division of labour, is here carried to its utmost

limits, since it has been asserted that as many as seventy hands are employed in making a single cup or saucer. Each person takes one single department, and thus there are some who prepare the materials, others who form the paste, paint, glaze, bake, &c. &c.

Those who perform their part in the consumption of this beautiful fabric, by drinking their tea from Chinese porcelain, may feel interested in knowing the different processes which a lump of clay undergoes, in passing from its parent earth in the form of an unshapely clod, into the elegant vessels before them. There is scarcely any thing which can illustrate in a clearer manner the industry and ingenuity of man, assisted by the elements, in changing the appearance of inanimate matter.

Within spacious enclosures surrounded by high walls the operations are conducted, and are of a very nice and delicate nature. A species of granite, containing a considerable quantity of quartz, and called by the Chinese *pe-tun-tse,* is reduced to a fine powder by a very laborious method. It is first broken into pieces by immense iron hammers, and then ground down by the hand with the pestle and mortar. This process is of course very tedious,

and might easily be accomplished by mills, such as are used in England; but the Chinese prefer this plan, as it enables them as they proceed to pick out any extraneous matter which might happen to be present.

The pe-tun-tse serves as a flux to assist the fusion of another matter which gives strength and consistence to the manufacture. This is called by the natives *kao-lin*, and is a species of fine clay, said to be similar to the growan clay of the Cornish mines. The vicinities of Alençon and St. Yrieix in France have been thought to produce as fine a variety, but many people still consider that it is on the quality of this substance that the superiority of the Chinese porcelain depends. This kao-lin may be completely dissolved in water, but the greatest heat of ordinary furnaces produces no effect upon it. The Chinese consider it as the foundation of the work, and ridicule the idea of Europeans attempting to make porcelain of the pe-tun-tse alone.

A more expensive substance than the kao-lin has been preferred of late years. It is called hoa-she, or wha-she, and is considered by Europeans to be similar to our soap-rock. When the article is prepared with this material,

it is of a remarkably fine grain and receives the colours very well. There is a considerable difference in the proportions of the kao-lin and pe-tun-tse, which are mixed together, and on this depends the fineness of the article. For the number one, first-chop, as they call it, the two materials are in equal quantities. The inferior kinds have less of the kao-lin in proportion, the most common having but one in three parts.

Having prepared and mixed the materials, they are kneaded together with the hand until they become a uniform paste. At this time the greatest care is taken to render it smooth and plastic, and to clear it from every particle of sand or other injurious matter. In this state, it is spread over the surface of slates, until a portion of the watery parts has evaporated, and it is left of a proper consistence for working. It is then laid upon the turning-wheel, or moulded into the proper shape with the hand and finished with the chisel. In Europe, it has been the custom at this part of the process, to subject the vessel to a certain degree of heat before the glazing is put on; but in China the whole is done together. When the vessel is reduced to the proper shape, the che-

kao, a composition of gypsum and some form of alkali, is laid on; this gives it its gloss and general colour.

The process of painting then commences. Very little care is bestowed upon the designs; and, as this department is intrusted to men who are paid no more for their work than the common labourers at the clay or the furnaces, it is no wonder that great defects should be frequently discoverable. With regard to the colours the greatest skill is shown; and many of them have not yet been equalled in Europe in brilliancy and permanence. We may mention, in particular, the blues and violets.

Lapis lazuli is a natural product of China, and was formerly extensively used to produce the blue colour, but is now almost superseded b ya cheaper substitute which is sent out from Europe. One of the most curious circumstances to be noticed in this part of the process is the number of artists employed in painting a single specimen. One man traces the outline of a flower, another of a pagoda, while a third is at work upon a river or a mountain; a fourth receives it to draw the circle round the edge, while a fifth puts on the pigments according to these marks. Each person has his own

peculiar department beyond which he cannot proceed, and it is thus that we may account for the odd mixture or jumbling together of so many separate and heterogeneous objects.

Every thing being now completed, it remains but to subject this soft and plastic vessel to the action of fire, by which it is rendered hard and brittle and the colours and glazing are duly spread and incorporated. Although this part of the process may appear very simple, yet it is found to be one of the greatest difficulty, requiring considerable judgment and extensive experience. Very often, with all his care, the workman finds his pains thrown away, his elegant cups and vessels converted into a stony mass or his vases warped and contorted. This may depend on the degree of humidity in the atmosphere at the time, but more particularly on the improper regulation of the heat.

As now made, the furnaces are square, ten feet and upwards in diameter, and composed either of iron or earth mixed with sand. The porcelain, when first introduced, is not allowed to come into direct contact with the flames. The touch of the hand would probably crush the plastic clay; the pieces are, therefore, lifted by means of a wooden fork, having a piece of

string suspended from its points. Taken up with this instrument, they are enclosed in earthen vessels lined with the finest sand. The smaller cups are laid in piles upon large saucers, with the most valuable and finest pieces placed in the centre. When the oven is thus filled, the aperture is nearly blocked up, leaving just room for the introduction of the fuel; which consists of pieces of wood, supplied so abundantly that two men are constantly in attendance for this purpose.

A superintendent or foreman of the work has to watch constantly to ascertain when the baking is completed. This takes some time, but depends in a great measure upon the size of the articles. For the purpose of inspecting the progress of the work, holes are made at the top of the furnace, through which the workman can see into the interior. When he judges that the wares are sufficiently heated from their being red-hot throughout, the fuel is gradually withdrawn, and the heat of the oven reduced as slowly as possible.

When quite cool, the manufactured articles are taken out, that the success of the process may be properly inquired into, and it is very fortunate if the whole turn out well. To show the deli-

cacy which is required in keeping up the proper degree of heat in the furnace it may be mentioned, that if the fire is applied too suddenly, the porcelain is sure to warp, or crack and split in various directions. If it be not kept up long enough, there will be very little or no transparency in the product, and the colours will not be amalgamated. If the fire be too intense, the whole mass may be vitrified, or the colours run one into the other. Lastly, if the heat be too suddenly reduced, the otherwise perfect vessel would not be annealed, and thus be liable to snap upon the least variation of temperature, if it did not fall to pieces in being taken out of its fiery habitation.

CHAPTER IV.

The art of painting—National taste—Lamquoi, the painter—Artists' houses—The shop—Stone carving—Rice-paper—Indian ink—The workshop—Copying—Manufacture of rice-paper drawings—Preparing the colours—The brushes—Native dexterity—State of the art in China—Minute workmanship—Ignorance of light and shade—Queen Elizabeth's portrait—Chinese landscapes—Very old drawings—Paintings on glass—Lamquoi's studio—Memento mori—Prospect of improvement.

Amid the various arts which have been devised for the instruction and entertainment of mankind, that of painting holds a station of permanent importance. People of all ranks in every country, and possessed of the greatest or the least civilization, take an interest in the productions which emanate from the pencil.

The cultivation of this art has been encouraged in most civilized nations, as its perfection has been considered to add much to the glory

of the country. The professors besides, by choosing the nature of their subjects, have it in their power to be great benefactors to mankind, by impressing the most valuable truths of morality and virtue, or recording the actions of those who are considered worthy of imitation.

In no part of the world, where there is any kind of community, are there wanting some specimens of this noble art, which are valued by those to whom they belong. The degree of perfection noticed in these performances is, of course, very variable, depending in a great measure upon the cultivation of the mind of the artist; for it requires, even in our own country, a long course of experience to be able to relish its higher excellences. Thus, among the lower orders in Great Britain, a gaudy, showy daub, would be preferred to a Correggio or a Raphael, as the expression, grouping, &c., are completely thrown away upon such people, but who yet admire the brightness of the colours which they can well understand.

In China, a high degree of perfection has been attained in painting, but in a totally different style from that of other nations. In nothing is the peculiarity of its people better shown than in this particular, appearing as if

they had had no communication whatever with the rest of the world, and derived all their knowledge from their own unaided resources. Of late years, they have had ample opportunities of improving themselves if they had been so willing, but national vanity has not permitted them to see any thing to admire in the works of those whom they please to style barbarians. After all, it is impossible to account for national taste in this particular. Even if you could clear the eyes of a Chinaman from prejudice, it would be very difficult to convince him that he was wrong, and to make him discover beauties where he now beholds defects.

In the western nations, as those of Europe are called by the Chinese, the old paintings which we possess are executed in the style which is most admired at the present day. On account of our reverence for antiquity and our high admiration of those performances, which we have vainly endeavoured to equal, these pictures have been handed down from one century to another as the models upon which all future operations are to be conducted, and the taste of the painters of them has been the standard to which we have constantly referred. The Chinese have not had an equal advantage. Their style of painting has always been the same as it

is at present, and, as they have a very great reverence for antiquity, they consider it the very acme of perfection. Although their drawings and paintings are deficient in what we consider some of the main essentials, yet it is always allowed, that they come up to and even excel our most boasted artists in some of those points which they consider alone requisite to constitute perfection.

To what degree of eminence the Chinese painters would attain if they were instructed in the higher departments of their profession we may give a fair guess, when we consider the beauty with which they execute all that they wish to excel in, and that they are not wanting in any of those qualities of the mind, so necessary to ensure success in whatever is undertaken. To give an idea of the present state of the art in the Celestial Empire, it will be as well first to describe what we can see of it in our visit to the outside city of Quang-tcheou-fou.

Those who have been at Canton of late years, cannot fail to recollect the shop of Lamquoi the painter. His house is the resort of all those who wish to pass away an hour in a pleasant and agreeable manner. Lamquoi has been mentioned in a former part of this work, as having been a pupil of Mr. Chinnery, of Macao, and

from him received instructions sufficient to enable him to paint in a tolerable manner after the European fashion. There are others of his countrymen who have likewise had this advantage but have not profited by it in an equal degree, so that Lamquoi stands decidedly at the head of his profession in Canton, and has always plenty of work. His chief occupation is in taking likenesses of a small size in oil colours, of the transient visitors to the city; and when the season is over and his foreign friends have left the port, he finds sufficient employment among his own countrymen. As he has under him many natives who follow the other branches of the business after the Chinese style, in separate apartments of the same house, a description of his studio, may perhaps serve to give a correct idea of the way of managing these matters in the dominions of His Celestial Majesty.

The house of the artist is in China Street, and is merely distinguished from that of its neighbours by the small black board placed over the door, with his name and occupation inscribed in white paint upon it. It should be mentioned, that all the houses in these streets consist of two stories. In most of the others the tradesmen reside in the regions above, and, as

no Fan-qui is allowed to ascend, they there manufacture some of the articles required in the shop below. The painters' shops differ in this particular that a stranger has access to any part where he may choose to wander, and different branches of the business are transacted on each of the floors.

Lamquoi himself has the highest station in his own house, and you therefore find him with all his tools at the very top of the building. On the first floor is situated the workshop, where the rice-paper and other drawings are executed, whilst the ground floor is occupied by that which may properly be called the shop. This is the general arrangement of the domicile of all the artists in this outside city. Some, however, take distinct branches of the art, and paint likenesses of ships, while others confine themselves merely to that style of drawing which exclusively belongs to the Chinese. It will be necessary now to go through these different apartments, and watch rather closely the operations of the workmen, and the materials with which their beautiful productions are performed.

Upon entering Lamquoi's house from the street, you pass into the shop where the

finished articles are exposed for sale. The most valuable of these are the rice-paper drawings, which are arranged according to their value in piles one upon the other, in glass cases placed around the room. There are many things sold here which are not made on the premises, but which are considered as belonging to the business. Thus on shelves in convenient corners various kinds of stone are placed, which are carved in a curious manner.

The implements and materials of workmanship are also to be here procured. These consist of paint-boxes, fitted up with saucers of colours, brushes, &c., and covered with beautiful rich silk. Rice-paper, done up in bundles of a hundred leaves each, is an article which has a very extensive sale. It is brought from Nankin, and is valued according to the size of the pieces. The rice-paper of the East Indies is made from the Æschynomene paludosa, but it is supposed that the rice-paper of China is manufactured from some malvaceous plant. The pith is taken out and flattened into thin leaves, which are sold according to their size and freedom from blemishes.

That substance which we call Indian ink is made for the most part in this country, and has

been supposed to consist of the inspissated liquid or ink of the cuttle-fish. It is now ascertained, however, that it is composed of a mixture of a fine kind of lampblack ground up with glue. Three kinds are to be procured at Canton. That which they consider the best is brought, as they tell you, from a place called Pau-kum. The second kind is manufactured at Nan-king; whilst the third and most inferior is made in the city of Canton itself. The Chinese themselves judge of the quality of the ink by the smell, and by breaking a piece in the middle, and observing whether or not it presents a shining, vitreous fracture. The scent is given to it by adding musk when it is manufactured, which being an expensive article, cannot be afforded except for the very best kinds.

A small flight of stairs, somewhat similar to a large ladder with wooden bannisters, conducts you up to the workshop on the first floor. There you see from eight to ten Chinese at work, with their sleeves turned up, and their long pigtails tied round their heads lest they should be in the way of their nice and delicate operations. Light is freely admitted from large windows at either extremity of the apartment. The room is not large, and possesses no other kind of

ornament, but the pictures which are arranged and fastened up so as to cover the walls on all sides. These are of various kinds, and are put up in this manner for sale.

A great many prints from Europe are among the number, and by their side are placed the copies which the Chinese have taken of them in oil and water colours. Many are brought hither by the officers of the vessels, who exchange them for native drawings, or frequently for the copy which is taken of them. It is astonishing with what correctness the Chinese will follow their original, and finish their copy with great beauty. The colouring especially is excellent; and, considering that this is necessarily left to their own judgment, often displays considerable taste in the harmony of the tints.

Native drawings of boats, villages, landscapes, &c. are among the rest fastened round the apartment, and have often a curious and grotesque appearance. Long benches, very similar to those used by carpenters in our country, are placed about the room, with just sufficient space between them to allow the artists to move freely in and out. The Chinese are not at all discomposed by the presence of

strangers, but work away very quietly, and show the greatest willingness to answer any question, or to let you see what they are doing. With a little attention, therefore, you are able to make out the whole process of manufacturing those delicate and beautiful productions, which are so justly prized in this country under the name of rice-paper drawings.

As you watch these men sitting on small stools placed before the benches, with their little apparatus arranged by their side in the greatest order, you cannot fail to be struck with the neatness and delicacy with which every little operation is performed. It will be seen that these drawings are not finished by copying from others, neither are they altogether original, and that a considerable part is done mechanically.

A piece of rice-paper is first chosen, which has as few blemishes or holes in it as possible, and is as large as the value of the picture, when finished, will warrant. They have a way of patching up any rents or holes in it, however, by placing behind the injured part a small piece of moistened glass, very similar in appearance to mica, and which is made from rice. When it is thus fastened, a morsel of rice-paper can

be patched on in front, so as to fill up the unseemly gap.

The paper being ready, it is washed over with a weak solution of alum, as they consider it is thus rendered more fit to receive the colours. This wash is frequently repeated during the progress of the work; so that before it is finished, it has received seven or eight coats. It is difficult at first to conceive the utility of the alum; but upon reflection it appears to me, that it is this mineral which gives such a degree of permanence to the colouring of the Chinese.

It is well known that alum differs from most other salts, in having no disposition to attract moisture from the atmosphere. On this account, it is now extensively used on the banks of Newfoundland for the curing of the codfish, which would very quickly be destroyed if sea-salt alone were used. By these frequent washings, thin layers of alum are interposed between the successive coats of paint, and thus protect them from moisture, which would otherwise, assisted by light, very quickly destroy their brilliancy. The Chinese seem to be in no fear on this account, but handle and expose the drawings in a much rougher manner than we feel

inclined to do, when we view the extreme delicacy and fineness of the pencilling.

The next process is to trace the outline; and this is done quite mechanically. There appears to be a certain number of these outlines, which are printed off and sold for the use of the artists, as you see the same figures in the whole of the shops, merely differing in the skill with which the details are completed. Whatever the subject may be,—whether a boat, a bird, or a mandarin,—it is laid upon the table, and the rice-paper is placed over it; and then, on account of the transparency of the latter, the figure is easily sketched upon it with black paint.

The colours are next prepared, and the process of laying them on in coats is very similar to that of oil-painting. The pigments used are always opake, and are ground up and mixed with the greatest care. After rubbing them down very finely with water, by means of a glass muller in a porcelain saucer, alum is added, and then a sufficient quantity of glue to make them adhesive. We prefer gum in this country, but the Chinese use glue, which the artists always keep ready warmed by their side.

A very small apparatus is needful for this

purpose. A neat little iron trivet is placed upon the table, and supports a small saucer of the size of a crown-piece containing the glue. To apply the necessary degree of warmth, the Chinaman every now and then lights a morsel of charcoal as big as a small bean, and places it beneath the pan, renewing it when it is burnt out.

Having prepared the colours, the artist proceeds to lay on that which we call the dead colouring. The general coat of the drapery, furniture, &c., is laid on the face of the paper; but where flesh is to be represented, the pigment is put on on the reverse side of the picture, so as to produce that beautiful effect of transparency practised with such success by our miniature painters on ivory.

Rarely after this is it necessary for the Chinese artist to look at his copy; the perfection of the work then depends entirely upon his own taste. Some, who are very experienced, are able to finish it altogether without any assistance after the outline is taken, but in general they refer to their model occasionally. It now remains but to mention the way in which they work to produce that extreme fineness of detail, which is so conspicuous in

the best specimens of these drawings. In some of them the workmanship is so fine, that you fancy you can actually see the threads of which the tunic is composed, belonging to a man very little larger than a grain of rice. The fine down or rather feathers on the back of a butterfly are often so perfect, that it would appear almost as if they had been counted for the purpose. Although a great part of this effect is produced by the natural texture of the rice-paper, still a considerable portion of merit is due to the way in which the colours are laid on.

The brushes employed in painting are similar to those in common use for writing, but are made much finer, consisting of a piece of small bamboo with the hair fastened into one of the extremities. The fur is in general white or gray; but there are some excellent brushes to be procured occasionally at Canton, made with a black hair belonging to an animal with which we are not acquainted. These last are considered the best, but are very scarce and consequently much more expensive.

In painting a part which requires a number of strokes much finer than can be produced by single touches of the pencil, two brushes are

employed. The smaller is held perpendicularly between the fingers of the right hand as in writing, while the larger is placed horizontally between the first and second fingers of the same hand. After the smaller brush has been dipped in the paint, a fine mark is made with it in the required direction. When this is done the brushes are immediately changed; the large one goes down to the paper while the small one supplies its place.

It would require a little time for a European to get into the knack of making this change adroitly; but with the Chinese it is done instantaneously, and without any assistance from the other hand. The larger brush is then applied, and, having no colour in it, by a little dexterous management the wet paint is dispersed into an infinity of lines much finer than could be produced by any single pencil. By altering the motion of the hand in this secondary manipulation the threads can be made to cross and interlace each other, and thus produce a resemblance to all the kinds of texture which may be required. Glue mixed with the colours has this superiority over gum, that it does not dry so quickly, and, therefore, time is afforded for this minute handling.

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By the side of these rice-paper painters are seated others, who are employed in copying miniatures and other small subjects on plates of ivory. Their extreme delicacy of touch, and accuracy in following their copy, render these people very fit for this office. Perhaps the minuteness with which some of them are finished exceeds the labours of our own artists in this branch, but they are very deficient in other particulars. The perpendicular way in which the pencil is held by these people enables a finer stroke to be made than perhaps could easily be accomplished by our way of handling, and allows them to keep the hand entirely off the paper upon which they are at work, as they merely lean upon the wrist and the bended arm.

Before we leave this room or studio of Chinese artists, it will be as well, while we have the different specimens around us, to examine the state in which the art exists at the present time among these children of Han. The subjects upon which they exercise their skill are, of course, extremely various, but there is a great deal of difference in the merit of different performances according to the nature of the subject chosen. In the painting of flowers,

butterflies, &c., we do not look for the higher excellences of the art, but are content if they exhibit splendid colours and great minuteness of detail. Accordingly, we find that these pieces are executed in a very superior manner. Indeed, with regard to the colouring, the Chinese particularly excel, whether in regard to the permanence and brightness of the colours or the faithfulness of the tints to nature. This is even apparent in the landscapes, which are on the whole the worst executed of all the drawings.

The greatest defect which we notice in examining the state of the art in this distant country, and which is most repugnant to our notions of propriety, is the total ignorance of the artist with regard to the effect of light and shade. Accordingly, we find that from the want of this essential every object represented looks meager, and without the roundness or prominence which is often required. This plan of operating is defended by the Chinese, who pretend that it is necessary to represent every thing, not as it appears to be but as it actually exists. They try to imitate objects on the paper, in the same way as they would carve them out in stone or wood. This notion may

probably have derived its origin from this latter process.

If we suppose that, on the first dawn of civilization, natural objects were admired and some rude attempts were made to imitate them, these would most probably be executed by carving them out of some solid substance. As the art increased in importance, it would be seen that it was necessary in order to ensure success, that some outline should be drawn on the block before the application of the chisel. This act would most probably be the first step to the discovery of the art of drawing, as it would show that objects could be represented on a flat surface.

After the outline has been, by a very natural transition, drawn upon paper or any other portable material, the colouring would very soon follow, and however excellently this might in process of time be performed, still the design would be of the same nature as if it was merely to serve for the commencement to a piece of sculpture.

Thus far the Chinese have gone in the discovery of the powers of the pencil. It would have required a fresh invention to find out, that

by imitating the chiaro-scuro, the whole resemblance of an object might be accomplished on a piece of paper, which they could then produce alone by the labour of the sculptor on a hard and bulky material. The art thus constituted, has arrived through successive ages at its present state of perfection in those branches with which the Chinese were acquainted.

Gorgeous colouring being now the main object to be attained, every thing which makes the painting look dull is considered a defect. On this account they object to the European pictures, as they look upon the shaded parts as so many portions smeared over and obscured with black paint. Thus, when shown at the time of one of our embassies to the capital, a portrait of George III., they said that it would have been all very well if the face had not been obscured by that dirty patch: meaning the dark shades on one side of the face.

This want of taste, however singular it may appear, is yet very common in vulgar and uneducated minds. Thus, even in our own country at the present time, it is not at all unfrequent to hear servants and others of the lower orders object to shadows at the side and bottom of

the nose in a portrait, as so much smut which has accidently been placed there. Another still more striking illustration of its occurrence even in a highly cultivated and exalted personage, is to be found in the history of England's queen, Elizabeth, who, when her portrait was to be painted, insisted that no shadow should appear upon the countenance. She considered that the painter would offer a personal affront to her if he allowed the least obscurity to be seen on the face of majesty. The painting which was the result of this mandate was executed, and is to be seen at the present day in the long room of the British Museum.

In some of the native drawings a considerable degree of *expression* is produced, much more than might be expected; but it is scarcely possible to give beauty to the countenances, as the features must necessarily be flat and square; a few, however, of the ladies delineated in the rice-paper drawings form an exception, as they really are very pretty.

Designing and grouping are other of the higher excellences in which they are very defective. With regard to the latter quality no apology can be made, but the imperfections in the former may, in some measure, be attributed

to their singular notion before mentioned, that they ought to represent objects as they really are, not as they appear to be. Thus a leg or an arm is drawn of the same length whatever its position, and no kind of effort at foreshortening is observable.

This defect in the drawing may also be occasioned in some degree by their practice of sketching every object as if it stood directly in front of them. Their ships, birds, &c. are painted in this manner with very little variation; so that you scarcely ever see a view of the head or stern of a junk, whatever number of them there may be in one picture. If therefore the human figure is drawn in this manner, as soon as one part is sketched, it would be necessary in a manner to turn the subject round in order to get a front view of the other parts which were only partly visible before; and thus the limbs often appear as if they were dislocated. The shading, however, would make a considerable alteration for the better if it were present, and take off a great portion of the distorted appearance.

The rice-paper drawings of the grand mandarins and their ladies are considered the best of their kind, and great pains is taken to give

them the highest degree of finish. The colouring of them is, for the most part, very beautiful and true to nature, with the exception of that of the skin, the tints of which are too uniform, and without that mixture and blending of one into the other on which its main beauty depends.

With regard to the Chinese *landscapes*, it may be said that they are in general very defective. Although the objects are often very finely drawn, and the tints of the colours laid on with great truth and faithfulness, yet there is a total want of perspective. The objects in the back-ground are as large as those in front, and not the slightest allowance is made for that mellowing of the tints which is produced by distance. Some few drawings form an exception to this rule, and would be creditable to a European artist of some celebrity.

There are some sketchy kinds of landscapes in high repute among the natives at Canton, who consider them quite masterpieces. They are very scarce, and consist of rough outlines of trees, rocks, waterfalls, &c., painted with a brush dipped in a single pot of colour. Although to our eye these performances have no merit whatever, except perhaps their freedom, the

Chinese reverence them somewhat in the same way as we do the rough sketches in pencil or chalk, done by Raphael, Da Vinci, and others of the old masters, and tell you with a chuckle of pleasure that they are "werry, werry olo."

In order to account, in some measure, for the very defective state of the art of painting in a country so highly civilized as China, it may be mentioned, that sufficient encouragement has never been given to its professors. The rulers of the Celestial Empire have not yet perceived the importance of this branch of industry, in refining the mind and calming the more vicious propensities of our nature.

If it had been looked at in this light, it is most probable that painters would have ranked very high in general estimation, instead of holding the low station which they occupy at present. They would have been placed with the cultivators of *mind*, who are at the top of the list. At present, they are considered as mere mechanics; as artisans, who manufacture their wares for the purpose of sale. Each of them keeps a shop, and is therefore a merchant, or trafficker; one of a class which is esteemed the least of all in this singular country.

The highest talent is often smothered by

prejudice and disdain. It is true, that it sometimes rises superior to the frowns of the world, and shows its merit in spite of oppression and wrong. This may be illustrated in China, by those few paintings which form an exception to the general rule of gross imperfections. But it is rarely that the art is improved by these single cases: in general, it requires patronage and public opinion to bring it to perfection.

The higher branches of the art of painting depend for their successful cultivation upon the tone of mind of the painter. Brilliancy of imagination, sufficient to produce the wonders in design and grace of which the art is capable, must proceed from a noble and exalted mind. The brow of the genius glows and his eye sparkles with enthusiasm, as he beholds in imagination those visions of sublimity and beauty which he often successfully transfers to his canvass. The cause of this enthusiasm is the hope of distinction, which is the ray of light that illumines his often weary and heart-sickening pilgrimage through the vale of care. This prospect is held out to artists in the regions of the west, where the successful painter holds a distinguished and enviable rank, and is often the companion of princes. Thus, in a great

measure we may account for the progress which the art has made in those countries, and for the number of exalted men whom it ranks among its professors. In China, on the contrary, no such inducement is held out. The successful artist has nothing to look forward to but to obtain a higher price for his commodities, without the least chance of promotion in rank or estimation. As innovation would not be encouraged, he would find no sale for his pictures if they were executed in a manner at all different from those with which his customers were familiar, and he would, therefore, be obliged to plod on again in the same jogtrot and mechanical manner as the rest of his countrymen.

It may be mentioned in this place that the Chinese are very famous for their paintings on glass. This is an art which is almost lost in Europe, but is very successfully practised in this country. This style of painting suits the Chinese artists very well, as it exhibits the splendour of their colours. Painted glass must be very extensively used in China for ornamenting the houses, &c., as, even in the suburbs without the walls of Canton, great numbers of

shops for the sale of this single article are collected together, so that the foreigners have given the locality the name of Painter Street. Our Jack-tars are much caught by this showy material, and generally carry away some trumpery specimens to dazzle the eyes of the fair dames of Shadwell and Blackwall.

Mounting another flight of steps, of the same rough and upright form as the last, you enter to the sanctum sanctorum, and are in the presence of *Mister* Lamquoi himself. A small unornamented room lighted by a skylight above constitutes the studio of the painter. The whole wainscot is covered with the small portraits of the sitters; some having the blue-jackets and the careless appearance of English sailors; others wearing the rich dress and high cap of the intelligent Parsee; while here and there may be distinguished the unassuming head of a Chinaman. They rest against the walls in various states of advancement. A few are finished, and the countenances seem to smile with satisfaction at the gallant show they make in their highly-gilded frames. Others again look sad or cheerful as they stand forth with more or less of the appearance of life, while

one or two may be seen as a mere outline, promising at some future period to come into existence.

I called at this place two or three times whilst remaining at Canton, and watched the progress of a portrait of a young and amiable friend then on the easel. I took an interest in the gradual development of the features, as I saw them approach more and more to the resemblance of the face of him whom I esteemed so much. But, alas! it never was completed. I saw it the last time before I left the country, in its old position on the wall of the apartment, neglected and unfinished. It was out of the power of Lamquoi to complete it. The sitter had ceased to live. The ruddy glow of health had been changed since the last visit to the pallid hue of death. There the unfinished painting stands, I dare say at this very moment, a finished picture of the uncertainty of human life!

Very little difference is to be observed between the studio of Lamquoi and the room of any of his professional brethren at the other end of the world. The only thing which strikes the eye of the stranger is the small size of the apartment for the transaction of so very exten

sive a business. The painter himself stands at his easel, generally incommoded by the numerous visitors, many of whose faces we have seen before in our survey of the walls of the apartment, and who cram in to watch his proceedings. Most of those strangers who can afford it have their portraits taken by Lamquoi, as they consider that they will have an additional value in the mother country, by having been painted by a Chinaman.

Lamquoi himself is a stout, thick-set man about the middle size, and bearing a considerable degree of intelligence and urbanity in his countenance. His operations are, of course, conducted in the same way as those of his European master, but with more neatness than is generally observed. His pallet, &c. is arranged in a very clean, tidy manner, and the colours mixed with the greatest care. Although he has, in general, more portraits to paint than he can well accomplish, and finishes them with expedition, he is considered to make no more by his profession than about £500 a year.

I have not heard that he has attempted any other than portrait painting, the higher walks of his art being at present beyond his reach, and probably it will be a long time before any

of his countrymen will be able to produce any thing which can compete with the works of the European masters. The progress made at present is, however, highly satisfactory. Lamquoi is able to take a very tolerable portrait. The likeness is in general very excellent, with a considerable portion of the natural expression; very little stiffness is observable, while the colours are laid on with truth and with a great degree of mellowness. Dr. Gall, the phrenologist, makes the following remarks in his Organology. "Those eyes, whose internal part, and the corresponding palpebral commissure are depressed, indicate, as I have discovered after twenty years of observation, the great development of the memory of persons. But having met with this faculty in a high degree in persons who had not the eyes placed in the manner indicated, I thought I had judged hastily, and said no more in my account of the cause of this organization; but since then I have found my first opinion confirmed so often, that I have been forced to return to it. Every time that I find the eyes so placed in an individual, whose organization is not otherwise too repulsive, I can engage that he has great facility

in recognising persons. Idiots have often been shown us, who by their faculty of recognising persons caused the astonishment of physicians. We have constantly found in these individuals, the above indicated position of the eyes."

He goes on to state, "It is probable that this faculty, carried to a very high degree, may principally constitute in a painter, the talent of successfully seizing a resemblance. This resemblance is not limited to the features, it is composed of whatever is characteristic in the whole person, the habitual gestures, the gait, the dress, &c. Hoffman, the famous portrait painter of Fribourg, in Brisgau, has in an eminent degree the eyes which we have described. I find the same conformation in Titian and Tintoret, who both excelled in the painting of portraits. In the print of Montaign, who constantly paints the whole person, the eyes are manifestly depressed at the internal angle. I have often been struck with the direction of the eyes of Sterne. It will be difficult to find any which present in a higher degree, the sign of this faculty."* If the above

* Vol. v., p. 6.

merit any degree of attention, it may fairly be inferred that the Chinese "handsome-face painters," possess great natural capabilities for the art, as they have all, Lamquoi particularly, the internal angles of the eyes very much depressed.

CHAPTER V.

Chinese festivals—New year of business—Chin-chin Ghos—China Street—Exclusion of females—Orderly behaviour—Foreigners in the mob—Exhibitions—Lof-pidgeon — Lamps and variegated lanterns — A Chinese illumination—Theatricals — Temporary stage — Male actresses—Degradation of comedians—Strolling troops—Floating theatres—Royal entertainment—Lord Macartney — Collection of plays — Songs and singing—Beauties of the drama—Novel dramatis personæ—The back streets — Felt statues — Music—Subscription of tradesmen—Festivals in general — The emperor and empress—The new year—Chinese felicity — Race of the Dragon-boats.

No people are more partial to shows and ceremonies than the Chinese. They have all the sanction of religion and authority to gratify this very harmless inclination. The famous Feast of Lanterns has often been mentioned, during which the whole country is in a blaze of coloured

light. At particular seasons of the year, and even on certain days of every moon, more or less parade and gorgeous show is exhibited. None of those holidays is perhaps entered into with more satisfaction than that held on the fourteenth day of September, being the commencement of the new year of business. This is the time when the teas are sent off on their way to Canton through the canals and streams of the interior, and when the whole of those who are concerned in the foreign trade really commence their laborious but profitable avocations.

On that day, in the evening, a grand gala is held throughout the city, called by the natives a "Chin-chin Ghos" or Thanksgiving, to commemorate this anniversary of national prosperity. The whole appearance of the suburbs is changed, and they glow with dazzling light. China Street, especially, is completely altered, and presents a decided contrast to its everyday appearance. Music sounds in every direction, while the squeaking voices of the tragedians are heard above the hearty laugh of the assembled multitudes.

As foreigners are not excluded at this time from their usual limited precincts without the

walls, they are able to watch the proceedings as they make their way among the crowd. Even to them the scene is not at all uninteresting, different as are their tastes and sentiments from those of the people with whom they are mixed; but they must look on with pleasure and satisfaction at what certainly presents great novelty and a considerable proportion of beauty.

Walking across the square before the factories, my friend and myself found that usually thickly populated place completely deserted, and not a stall or a lantern to be seen. Every one of the natives was engaged either in assisting at or witnessing the show, so that the walk was left perfectly free for the measured step of the resident merchant, who had seen Chinese festivals too often to be tempted to direct his steps towards this one on the present occasion.

As we approached the arched entrance to one of the China streets, the hum of voices and the clang of gongs reminded us of the approach to a country-fair in Britain. There is a great resemblance between the sounds you hear at an English fair and a Chinese festival. The same screeching and screaming, the same discordant strains from broken kettle-drums and penny

trumpets, the same popping of crackers, and roaring of tumultuous laughter. What is to be seen in China is, however, very singular, and of a much superior character.

As you stand at the entrance of the covered street, you obtain a view of a scene, certainly very beautiful but very difficult to describe. Looking along the street, you see a perfect plain of closely-packed, well-shaved heads of Chinamen with dangling pigtails, narrowing off in the distance in fine perspective, until blended with those in the passages and squares on the other side of the factories. Above them are depending large lamps and chandeliers, mixing their glare with the more mild and tempered light which proceeds from elegant lanterns, painted with the brightest and the richest colours.

Following the eyes of the multitude, you look up to see the images and devices which are arranged on platforms across the street, at a small height above their heads; or to watch the gestures and actions of fantastically dressed comedians, who are playing their tricks in narrow boxes, placed in a similar manner at the ends and angles of the thoroughfare.

Before mingling with them, we naturally

looked to see the kind of people who composed the crowd. They were all men, no women, even of the lowest orders, being allowed to mix in such motley assemblies. The tunics of these lords of the creation bore evident marks of the late dryness of the season, and the reluctance of the Chinese to convert river-water to any other useful purpose than watering their rice. The people were in fact of the very lowest orders, and many of them appeared to have come from the country to be present at this city festival.

Wedging our way among the crowd, which rolled about like the heavy swell of the sea, we soon found ourselves in the centre of the street, and were able to examine a little more minutely the nature of the amusements which seemed to give such general satisfaction. The shops were all closed, and the street was entirely covered in for the occasion, so that it had the appearance of a long apartment filled with company. The people were remarkably quiet and orderly. Not a stick was to be seen in the hands of a single individual among them; and, although thousands were closely huddled together, and of course a great number of them strangers to each other, not the slightest disposition to

quarrelling was evinced. They stared like our country clod-hoppers, with their mouths wide open with admiration and astonishment, at what they saw, and as a favourite actor tickled their fancy they roared with laughter, and rolling about with pleasure often jostled rudely against each other; yet, every thing was taken in good part, without the least surliness or ill-temper.

A kind of ring was generally made round the foreigners, each native trying to avoid coming into actual contact with them; but sometimes, when the human tide could not be withstood, and many were driven rather roughly against us, the sight of a small stick which we carried for the purpose was sufficient to make them remove to a convenient distance, as soon as the surrounding mob would allow them. This state of meek forbearance is to be attributed to the peaceable nature of their domestic manners, and not, we should think, to inherent cowardice or meanness in the Chinese people.

Projecting across the street, some little height above the heads of the natives, were small platforms or hanging boards, supporting composition figures executed in a very beautiful manner. They were dressed in the first

style, to represent the grand mandarins and their ladies. Some were reclining on sofas and couches, while others bent over or stood near them in various positions. As the expression of the countenances and the attitudes were well executed there was no difficulty in making out the stories, which were representations of various modes of courtship and the progress of the suit; the whole of which is called by the Chinese "Lof pidgeon," when talking to Europeans.

The ornamented lanterns adorning the vessels on the river, and which have been already described, would look very miserable indeed if placed by the side of those which are exhibited on the grand gala days in the cities, however they may attract the notice of those who have just arrived. In nothing whatever do these people show more taste than in these ornaments. The lantern may be considered almost peculiar to the Chinese, and, as a national ornament, does not give place to any thing to be found in any other country. They are made of horn, silk, glass, paper, and sometimes of varnish alone over a netting of fine thread.

The decoration bestowed on these lamps is

often of a very superior kind, and is only equalled by the elegance of their shape. Some of those seen in the interior of the country were of enormous dimensions, measuring twenty-seven feet in diameter, so that they were like large apartments, in the interior of which company might be entertained. The ordinary ones are not so large, those observed on the present occasion being about a couple of feet across and three or four feet high, but still adorned with the most expensive trappings.

These lanterns are generally hexagonal in their shape, with the frame-work carved in the richest manner. Ribbons and silken cords are fastened about them, while the gayest-coloured tassels depend from every corner. They are lined with white transparent silk, on which are painted landscapes and figures representing nature in her gayest and most winning mood. When lighted up within by means of a great number of wax candles or lamps, they send out a stream of mellowed, tinted light, the pleasing effect of which can only be conceived by those who figure to themselves the painted windows in the old Roman Catholic chapels, or those of our own days at the University of Oxford or Cambridge. The most ingenious devices are

sometimes adopted for the purpose of rendering these lanterns still more attractive. Figures of men on horseback, birds, &c., are made to appear in full motion, by attaching to them small threads, which are fastened to a horizontal wheel, revolving by means of the heat of the lamp on the principle of the smoke-jack.

The brilliant appearance of these illuminations has always attracted the attention of foreigners, and especially of those belonging to the embassy of Lord Macartney, when they saw them beaming over and reflected from the water of the great rivers near the capital. What a splendid state, therefore, must the whole country be in during the Feast of Lanterns, when it is computed that no less than two hundred millions of these gorgeous lamps are exhibited at one time throughout the empire! How paltry by the side of this would appear the most brilliant illuminations, which we are able to get up for the commemoration of any great public event!

Passing on among the crowd, our attention was next directed to the actors, who were exhibiting their powers on temporary stages, erected over the heads of the people at the ends of the streets. The representations appeared to

depend entirely upon the skill of the performers, as no kind of scenery was visible behind them. A narrow platform, with a few bamboos set up around the sides and at the back, on which was suspended a coloured cloth, was the whole of the arrangement necessary to complete this temporary theatre. Although this exhibition was intended for the common people alone, and, of course, the performances were not of the highest class, yet it appears that very little more preparation is considered necessary unless the entertainment is given on very important occasions.

A foreigner may look a long while at one of these performances before he is able to derive amusement from it, or to understand how it is possible that any other person can do so. One of the first circumstances that strikes his attention is that the whole of the performers are men, no women being allowed to go upon the stage. As it is still necessary to represent that interesting portion of mankind, without whom no story can be complete, some of the men are dressed up as females: a small ledge in front of the stage serving to hide the sprawling feet, which would otherwise take away all the charm of the deception. The "Golden Lilies" being

thus dispensed with, the harsh natural voice of the male sex is altered for the falsetto, and a screaching, penny-trumpet sound is uttered, as an imitation of the softer notes of the female. When you look at one of these lady-actors, and notice the distorted faces he makes as he pours out this flood of crude, squeaking rubbish, you cannot fail to be seized with the greatest disgust, and to stop your ears mechanically whenever you fancy it repeated. The sound still haunts you, however, wherever you go; you hear it resound from one end of the place to the other. This, which I considered the characteristic feature of the Chinese comedy, is often uttered in so loud and piercing a key, that you may frequently distinguish it above every other sound in the vicinity. At Whampoa especially, I have been obliged to notice it above the sound of all the kettle-drums, gongs, and trumpets, which were in full operation at some distance inland on the adjacent shore, during the festivity of the new moon.

On account of the poverty of the oral language, the meaning of the performers is required to be shown much more by their actions than by their words; so that what we observe of the drama at Canton, made up as it appears to

be of gestures and uncouth sounds, gives us a very unfavourable idea of its present state throughout China. It appeared, however, to be very well suited to the tastes and opinions of the common people, as they roared with laughter and seemed highly delighted at what we were apt to consider vastly inferior to our Punch and Judy. But after all, not understanding the language, the stranger is somewhat in the position of a man in a ball-room, who, having stopped his ears to the music, thinks all the company mad for jumping about in such an extravagant manner. Opinion and custom are the music, which makes the most ridiculous antics pass for sensible and intelligent actions.

However popular the drama may be among all classes in China, and there is every evidence that it is so, still its professors have never been held in much estimation in that country. It is considered merely as the amusement of an idle hour, and no idea of its utility as a political or moral agent would appear to be at all entertained.

The performers are, in general, slaves to the manager, and a heavy penalty is imposed upon those who would oblige a child to enter the profession; so that the actors are looked upon

as the very dregs of society. There is no regular exhibition in any public theatre at stated times of the year, but the actors go about in troops, to be hired by those who can afford to pay for their services. Many hundreds of these companies are employed in Peking alone, while others stroll about the country, or take the course of the rivers and canals in barges and floating-houses. Even when the emperor chooses to see a play, he has to hire those who are in the most general repute, and bestows little favour upon them, however pleased he may be with their performances; nor does he attach them to him as a part of his household.

Notwithstanding these circumstances, no people are better employed. An entertainment of any kind is not considered complete without a dramatic exhibition, and the less opulent individuals will often subscribe together to defray the expenses of enjoying together this favourite amusement. The public inns, and all the large private houses, have a room which is set apart entirely for this purpose, and we have seen how soon and how easily a temporary stage is erected when the populace alone are to be gratified.

The princes and grand mandarins enjoy the

pleasures of the theatre chiefly during their meals, and the stage is permanently fixed opposite to the royal table. On this the actors play their parts, and assist royal digestion by their wit and talents. During the progress of Lord Macartney's embassy through the country, every attention was paid to the ambassador of his Britannic Majesty, and to please him especially, one of these moveable theatres was erected opposite his temporary dwelling, and the actors exerted their skill during the time of the repast. But his lordship begged as a particular favour that they would dispense with this disagreeable ceremony. The Chinese mandarins stared with astonishment at his singular taste, but upon his repeated entreaties withdrew the nuisance.

The drama labouring under such disadvantages, all hope of honour and distinction being denied to the performers, we should not expect to find that China had produced many Shakspeares, who had given birth to noble and sublime sentiments. No name appears to be held in reverence, or referred to with pride, as a genius in this branch of literature. There have been many writers, however, in this department; for there exists a collection of

one hundred and ninety-nine volumes, from which have been selected a hundred plays, supposed to be the best productions of the class. Five of these alone have been translated into European languages, the titles of them being—"The Orphan of Tchao," "The Sorrows of Han," "The Heir in his Old Age," "The Circle of Chalk," and "The Intrigues of a Waiting-maid."

The defects which are to be found in this species of composition may pretty well be inferred, from the low and grovelling state in which the dramatic art is held in the country. Sufficient inducements or prospects have not been held out by the influential members of society, to call out the energies of those who had genius for the task of reformation. The unities of time and place, with all those things which are considered by us essential to constitute a regular drama, are entirely disregarded. The art has not yet had sufficient *mind* bestowed upon it to bring it to any degree of perfection.

Even the dialogue labours under a great disadvantage. On account of the scantiness of the spoken language, words are not to be found sufficient to express the stronger and more impassioned feelings, so necessary to produce effect

upon the stage. Here, therefore, the actor has to eke out the meaning of abrupt and disjointed sentences, by the most laboured and artificial actions; and, after all, the most affecting scenes are finished in such a summary and business-like manner that the effect is any thing but imposing.

Another striking peculiarity in the Chinese plays is the repeated introduction of singing into the most serious and affecting scenes. Thus, as the author of "The Chinese Miscellany" observes, "The Chinese plays are intermixed with songs, in the middle of which the actors often stop to speak a sentence or two in the common tone of declamation. On the other hand, it appears shocking to us for the actor in the middle of a dialogue all of a sudden to fall a singing; but we ought to consider that among the Chinese, singing is added to express some great emotion of the soul,—as joy, grief, anger, despair. A man, for example, who is moved with indignation against a villain, sings; another, who animates himself to revenge, sings; a third, who is going to put himself to death, sings likewise."

With all these disadvantages the dramas are often full of feeling, and cannot be read without

a considerable degree of interest. The quickness of the movements and actions would also preclude any of those feelings of *ennui*, which we are apt to experience when we have to listen to long-winded and tedious speeches. Those performances which are to be seen without the walls of Canton must be of a very inferior kind, a mere congeries of buffoonery; as the populace is kept constantly in a state of laughter, without any mixture of sentiment or feeling.

Those who have witnessed the best specimens of this performance, both in the interior at the tables of the grand mandarins, and those given to their honour by the Hong merchants of Canton, found them bearing the same general characteristics, but certainly conducted in a superior style. The dresses were remarked to be very splendid, but there was no kind of scenery or attempt at stage effect. Among the *dramatis personæ*, however, in one instance, a singular kind of actor was introduced, consisting of a dragon made of pasteboard, from whose mouth issued a torrent of fire and flame. The music on these occasions was considered by far the most disagreeable part of the entertainment. At the most solemn and tragic scenes of the drama, the noise of the gongs and kettle-drums

was really horrifying, and such as one would almost expect to rouse the dead. Feats of jugglery and tumbling were also exhibited at the same time; and, on one occasion alone, a couple of children performed a kind of minuet to the sound of very tolerable instrumental music.

After having examined the nature of the dramatic performances in China Street, we passed on through the crowd and entered the narrow passages at the back of the factories. The illuminations here were not so brilliant as in the other streets; but in the small squares, and in the angles of the buildings, exhibitions of different kinds were taking place. In one corner were to be seen jugglers playing their tricks; while in another, tumblers astonished the people by their extraordinary manœuvres. These latter gentry sometimes displayed the most astonishing feats of agility.

As we passed along, our attention was once or twice drawn to a silent species of exhibition, which attracted a degree of admiration from the natives who occasionally stopped a moment to stare. In a rather secluded corner were placed gigantic figures of fierce warriors with all their implements of war, and dressed in a very handsome but curious

style. Others again were sitting on horseback, decked out with the gayest trappings. The figures were made of a substance in appearance like felt, and were of gigantic size. These silent spectators of the festival were saluted every now and then by the rapid report of hundreds of crackers, which were fired by those who seemed to be in attendance upon them. We should have had no difficulty in understanding who these gentry were, even if we had not observed the small sticks of incense which were slowly consuming before them. They were idols belonging to the Confucian, or State religion, and are always exhibited on Chinese holidays.

Those passages which are rather wider than the others, and are therefore called by the English *squares*, were occupied on this night by bands of musicians, who sent forth their harsh and grating sounds with even more clamour than ordinary. Passing these noisy congregations as quickly as possible, we were soon able to regain the more open streets, and then to return to the square before the factories.

The expense of these exhibitions is, we understand, entirely defrayed by the shopkeepers, who are obliged to subscribe together for the

amusement of their customers. On the whole, it will fairly be allowed that the amusements were varied, and that, considering the tastes of those for whom they were intended, they were of a superior kind. The people seemed to be highly delighted, and behaved themselves with far more decorum than is usually observed on these occasions in other countries.

This perhaps may serve as a specimen of the sort of exhibition which pleases the vulgar. The only difference to be observed between these and others provided for the great is in the cost and magnificence of the preparations. Some of these festivals have for their object the inculcation of particular moral precepts, or the stimulus to a useful species of industry. Of this kind is that mentioned before, which takes place at the commencement of the spring for the encouragement of agriculture. It was then shown, that the sovereign himself took part in the proceedings, and applied the imperial hand to the plough.

As the emperor is thus the patron of one branch of agriculture, the empress may be considered the patroness of the other, and assists at a ceremony for the purpose of encouraging the cultivation of the mulberry-tree, and the

rearing of silkworms, on which depend the supply of the substances most fit for clothing. This festival takes place in the ninth moon, when her majesty proceeds with her principal ladies to sacrifice at the altar of the inventor of silk manufacture. When this ceremony is concluded, the ladies collect mulberry-leaves for the supply of the silkworms, preserved at the imperial depot; the other operations generally performed in the process of obtaining the silk from this valuable insect are also imitated, such as putting the cocoons into hot water, winding off the filaments, &c.

The celebration of the new year is a ceremony to which all classes look forward with great interest, and some time is spent in making preparations for it. All public offices are shut up, and nothing is to be seen on this occasion but festivity and joy. Cards of congratulation, on which are portrayed the three emblems of Chinese felicity, are sent from one person to another. These people differ a little from us in their notions of sublunary bliss, as they consider it to depend upon the possession of offspring, promotion, and long life. The first they represent by a child, the second by a mandarin, and the third by an old man and a

stork, as this bird is believed by them to live the longest of all the feathered tribes.

Many other festivals occur throughout the year; those denominated in the corrupt language of Canton, "Chin-chin Ghos" taking place every moon. Some others there are which are held on certain fixed days, and differ from those which we have been describing. The race of the Dragon-boats is a very pretty spectacle, and cannot fail to interest the visitors who may happen to be in Canton at the time. On the fifth day of the fifth moon, are launched into the river boats made very narrow, but of such a length that they are capable of holding from fifty to eighty men each. Every man works with a paddle in the way already described, and of course the rapidity of the motion must be very great. These are called Dragon-boats from their great length, and the fierceness with which they compete together. This is almost the only time when the Chinese show any rivalry in athletic exercises, but they enter into this sport with becoming spirit. The long, narrow barges being arranged in proper order start together, and each stroke of the paddles is regulated by the sound of a gong, with which one of the men stands up in the boat and beats

the proper time. In the heat of competition the vessels often come into collision, when they are frequently upset or broken, the discomfited watermen swimming to the nearest shore.

CHAPTER VI.

The Celestial Empire—Temperate habits—Apothecaries' shops—Chinese doctor — Drugs — Ginseng —Wonder-working root — Herb-gatherers — Effects of tea and opium—Jesuit Duhalde—Chinese ink—Two doctors at once—Mercury—Quack's handbills—Study of medicine—Anatomy—Misplaced knowledge — Astrology—Pious work—Singapore doctor—Physiology—The shadow in the water—The nose ancestor—Influence of the planets — Chinese Pentad — The five colours — The Yâng and the Yin — Fantastic theories — Doctrine of the pulse—Mahommedans — Fortunate days — Animal Magnetism.

BEFORE proceeding to examine the shops in the back streets without the walls of Canton, we must not omit to devote a short time to those in China Street, which are kept for the sale of the small but powerful simples and compounds, denominated *drugs*. Notwithstand-

ing their vain and absurd boast of being inhabitants of the Celestial Empire, the Chinese, with the rest of their fellow-mortals, are constantly obliged to have recourse to whatever offers them the slightest hope of alleviating the thousand afflictions to which flesh is heir. If it were possible by temperance and moderation in living, to become exempted from disease altogether, these people would perhaps on the whole stand a fair chance of obtaining that blessing. The strong bar of necessity keeps the greater number within bounds as to the indulgence of the appetite, while, by the excellence of the laws and customs, they are kept in such good social order, that they do not often derange their health by the indulgence of violent and malignant passions.

But still, even here, the common burden of humanity must be borne. The Chinese are nearly as much afflicted with disease as any other people, and although many causes will operate to give some slight degree of peculiarity to their complaints, yet still the same general features will always be observed from one end of the world to the other. We are no more able to ascertain the reason of these peculiarities, than we can give a satisfactory explanation of the difference

which exists between the head of a Chinaman and that of an Englishman.

The apothecaries' shops in Canton vary very little from our own in their arrangement, however they may differ as to the nature and properties of the medicines. They are by no means of rare occurrence in China Street, and seem to be much frequented. Around the apartments are arranged shelves containing jars and bottles, and in the different corners and at the lower part of the room drawers are placed one over the other, labelled and numbered as in Europe. On a small counter at the back part of the shop stand the mortars, with the usual instruments for writing, and the small box containing the little scales which have been described before. Every thing is arranged in the neatest manner and kept admirably clean.

I used frequently to walk into one of these shops and have a chat with my professional brother. He could not talk a great deal of English, but was very obliging in answering as well as he was able all my queries, about the virtues and properties of the medicines and the way in which they were administered. He was a very grave, respectable-looking personage, and seemed anxious to know the way of treat-

ing complaints in Europe. He was taken ill himself one day and insisted upon my prescribing for him, as he, like the rest of his countrymen, had a great deal of faith in English doctors. In order to find some drugs which might be suitable for his complaint, I looked into every pot and rummaged about among the drawers. The old man himself assisted me in the search, and pulled out his most valuable panaceas from secret and unthought-of nooks and corners. Without finding any thing on which I could depend, I had an opportunity of inspecting the whole of the Materia Medica, and, assisted by the scraps of conversation we had together, of judging in some degree of the real state of medicine in the Celestial Empire.

There are many drugs which are brought to Europe from China, which are considered by the faculty of our part of the world to possess very excellent qualities, but are almost disregarded by the inhabitants of the country to which they are indigenous. Others again which we believe to be inefficient, and only fit to be thrown out upon the dunghill, are highly esteemed in China and are there worth their weight in gold. The same reflection would

probably occur to a Chinese doctor, if he were to inspect a druggist's shop in London; he would often wonder what good effect could follow from swallowing such curious, and apparently disgusting, materials as are there kept. It would be a difficult matter to decide between them, when so many doctors disagree.

The greater number of Chinese medicines are derived from the vegetable kingdom. There is scarcely a plant to be found in the empire, some part or other of which is not used by the physicians; so that if the notion be correct, that nature has provided in every country for the maladies of its inhabitants, these people have an ample store from which to make their choice. The root of one vegetable, the stalk of another, the fruit of the next, and the flowers of the fourth, are each carefully collected and dried for the service of the invalid. As in every other country, however, some plants are considered far superior to the others, so in China you find a few which are thought to be universal panaceas.

You cannot remain in one of the shops a few minutes without seeing a native customer come in to purchase a portion of *ginseng*, which is supposed by these people

superior to every other medicine on the face of the globe. Its name, ginseng, jin-chen, or nindsin, signifies "The wonder of the world," or "The dose for immortality." Hence the name which has been applied to it by our systematic botanists is the panax quinquefolius. The cures which are reported to have been performed by this drug, would almost make one believe that it had some most astonishing virtues, or that it had none at all. It has been said by Père Jartroux, that the most celebrated physicians of China have written volumes on this root alone. They assert that it is able to ward off or remove fatigue, to invigorate the enfeebled frame, to restore the exhausted animal powers, to make old people young, and, in a word, to render man immortal: this saving clause being added, however, by the more cautious—"If any thing on earth can do so." The most improbable stories are told of its powers, even at the present day, in the cure of disease, but are not to be compared to the extravagant legends which are now preserved by oral tradition alone.

Ginseng is very scarce in the empire of China; the only places where it is found being in the mountains of Shan-tung and Leao-tong. The chief supplies, with the exception of those

obtained from America, from which country it is now abundantly exported to China, are procured from Tartary, where it is considered of such importance, that the deserts where it grows are strictly guarded, and heavy fines and punishments are inflicted upon those who trespass upon the grounds, or are detected in the act of unlawfully digging up the roots. No herb has perhaps received so much attention, or has enjoyed so long and permanent a fame. It is asserted, that at one time the emperor wished to monopolize the trade in this wonder-working root, and actually sent out a body of ten thousand Tartars to dig it up. After a search of six months they returned, having collected but the very small quantity of 20,000 pounds weight; that is, about two pounds to each man. The cause of this deficiency may in some measure be attributed to the cautious manner of collecting it, as it is said that great danger and difficulty attend the labour. It must not be dug up, also, at any time it may be found, as the herbalists insist that its virtues depend upon its being gathered on the ten first days of the second, fourth, and eighth moon, when they suppose that the stars are propitious.

Like all other drugs in every other country, the ginseng has fluctuated greatly in its value, depending on the better or more scanty supply of the market. Formerly it was worth eight and even ten times its weight in silver, but latterly its price has fallen, probably owing to fraudulent mixture of other more common roots. The panax fructicosus is often substituted for it. Another plant, the root of which is called chyn-len, supposed to be the ophiorhiza mungos, is frequently made to supply its place. This plant, whose properties are tonic and febrifuge, is in great request throughout the East, and fetches a high price.

The ginseng, however adulterated it may be, is in general request. The Chinese mix it in their tea and soup, and take it with their usual meals, night and morning. As it is a powerful bitter stomachic, it must tend to invigorate the stomach, and take off in a great measure the injurious effects which might otherwise follow from the habitual consumption of tea and opium.*

* The Jesuit Duhalde, who has written a long account of this wonder-working root, gives the following as the result of his own experience :—" Ce qui est certain, c'est qu'elle subtilize le sang, qu'elle le met en mouvement, qu'elle l'échauffe, qu'elle aide à la digestion, et qu'elle fortifie d'une manière sensible. Après avoir dessiné celle que je décrirai, dans la suite, je me tâtai le poux, pour

Great as the number of simples used by the Chinese physicians may be, none, with the exception of the ginseng, has attained such celebrity as to deserve particular mention. Tea, although so invariably drunk by all classes, is occasionally administered as a medicine, as it is sometimes even at the present day in France, and tobacco is also to be found in the shops. Camphor is much esteemed, but that procured from the Malays is preferred.

Many medicines are also derived from the animal and mineral kingdoms, and a great number from sources which appear to have exercised Chinese ingenuity for their discovery. Any dirt or rubbish is occasionally made up into pills by the common order of doctors, and administered with the most beneficial effects to those whose imaginations alone are in fault. In this point, the Chinese do not differ so much from the Europeans as might be supposed. A few years ago our own Materia Medica contained articles of the most ridiculous character, but

sçavoir dans quelle situation il étoit : je pris ensuite la moitié de cette racine, toute crûe sans aucune préparation ; et une heure après je me trouvai le poux boucoup plus plein et plus vif, j'eux de l'appétit, je me sentis beaucoup plus de vigueur, et une facilité pour le travail que je n'avais pas auparavant."—Vol. ii., page 151.

which are now completely neglected by our more enlightened physicians. At the present time, however, in Russia and elsewhere, the most out-of-the-way substances are administered as medicine. Very few compounds can be found in China which have not, at one time or other, been thought to possess medicinal properties. Among the rest, that substance which we call India-ink, has in its turn had a trial; for when it is very old, its sensible qualities are enhanced, and therefore, by analogy, the Chinese consider that it must at the same time have gained other properties which are not so apparent.

It would appear as if the Chinese sometimes put themselves under the care of two doctors at the same time, and take the medicines of both. Our compradore complained to me one day of an affection of the chest for which I gave him a box of pills. The next time I saw him he begged me to replenish it, as he said they had done him much good. Upon my blaming him for not having finished them sooner, he put his hand into his pocket, and pulled out a small bottle half-filled with black, dirty-looking balls, which he told me were the medicines prescribed for him by his native

doctor. He said he had a great deal of faith in us both, and therefore thought he could not do better than follow both the prescriptions. In short, he gave me to understand that he took a dose of each of the pills alternately; two or three of mine one day, and half a tea-spoonful of his fellow-countryman's the next, until the whole were consumed. As the old man got better under this novel plan of treatment; and as I could not discover the success of each practice, as they did who procured streaky bacon by alternately feeding and starving a pig, I was content to divide the credit of the cure with my unknown brother of the Central Empire.

Among the products of the mineral world to be found in the apothecaries' shops at Canton, *Mercury* deserves to rank the highest, as the one in most general estimation. A great many preparations of this metal may be found, nearly as many as are in general use in Europe, but rarely are they to be seen properly prepared, so as to be administered with any great degree of accuracy. In that excellent work on China lately published by Mr. Davis, may be found a statement of the whole process of making these chemicals, as observed by Mr. Pearson, who

had extensive opportunities of observation whilst residing at Canton. By this account, the state of chemistry among the Chinese is at a very low ebb, and the result of their labour in this art is generally imperfect and at all times uncertain. The metal itself is generally procured from cinnabar or vermilion, which occurs native in many of the provinces, particularly in that of Shen-see. As a medicine, it is considered a specific in some disorders, and is supposed to have formed the principal ingredient in what was called "the liquor of immortality," the injurious effects arising from the excessive use of which have now excluded it almost completely from practice.

Besides mercury, many other metals are occasionally used: these are either native to the country, or brought from the Indian islands or the Malayan peninsula; so that it appears that the Chinese materia medica is well stocked with active and powerful medicines, which only require proper skill and science in prescribing them, in order to produce the most beneficial effects.

The contents of the drug-shops having been examined, it now remains but to say a few words as to the way in which the shopkeepers dispose of their goods, before we proceed to

nvestigate the present state of the art and science of medicine in the dominions of his Imperial Majesty. The apothecaries' houses are very much frequented, as many things are sold there which are required for daily consumption. Every article is wrapped up neatly in a piece of paper, and tied with a morsel of the same material twisted up as a string. The name of the drug is then written on the outside, with an account of its properties and doses. The inferior orders of practitioners alone undertake the management of disagreeable and disreputable complaints. They paste placards about the town, and distribute handbills, in the same way as the same class of gentry in our great cities. Thus, in many points there is a great similarity between them and us in the management of the inferior departments of the practice of medicine, and in these the Chinese do not appear to great disadvantage. But we now proceed to a consideration of the higher branches of the art, in which there is little doubt that we have a decided superiority.

It must always be interesting to the general reader to know the real state of the medical art in any country, as, besides the evident benefit which that art is able to confer upon the species

by rendering human life much more free from misery than it otherwise would be, you are able by studying it, to gain a correct notion of the state of various collateral branches of knowledge, with which at first sight it might appear to have no connexion.

Setting aside for the present the more tangible and obvious practice of surgery, it will readily be allowed that the science of medicine is the most complicated and obscure of all those which the genius of man has ever attempted to investigate. Its progress depends entirely upon the advancement of a variety of other branches of knowledge of which it is composed, and without which the practice of it would be a mere blind dependence on experience, a groping in the darkness of ignorance and chance. A strong and powerful mind may, occasionally, see a little way further than the rest, and cut out a path rather less devious than the beaten track; and thus we account for the success of some illustrious men in barbarous times. But those who succeed them are very little benefited by their acuteness, as they are still involved in the same obscurity, and have not the same penetration to pierce the gloom.

There is little difficulty, therefore, in account-

ing for the very slow progress which medicine has made towards perfection until of late years. The importance which has been attached to the collateral sciences, and the adoption of every new discovery to the elucidation of the phenomenon of health and disease during the last century, have conduced towards the marked change which has taken place during that period, and which now promises to set our notions of practice on a more solid and reasonable foundation. It will be as well perhaps to show in a slight manner, how important these collateral sciences are to the healing art, and then to see how far the Chinese have proceeded towards their investigation.

Although the knowledge of Anatomy is not of such essential service to the practice of physic as to that of surgery, it is still of great importance as it is the foundation of physiology, on which the science more particularly depends. It may appear of little consequence to know the exact position or shape of the heart or liver, if we can be certain that either of these organs is affected with disease, or that their disordered action gives rise to the particular symptoms which are observed. But so obscure is the present state of the science, that the diagnosis of disease is one of the most difficult of its

departments, and often the most acute physicians are deceived as to the organ or part affected, and would be much more frequently in the dark, if they were not able to investigate the seat of the complaint by physical means. It is thus that manipulation and the application of that elegant instrument the stethescope, become so highly useful.

To know the exact position and relation of different organs becomes thus a matter of great importance. In this species of knowledge the Chinese physicians are very deficient. They know that there are such organs as the stomach, liver, heart, and kidneys; but by some strange mischance, they believe them to be placed in situations the most contrary to where they actually exist. Thus the heart is, according to their notions, on the right side and the liver on the left. This *misplaced* knowledge was noticed by Dr. Abel among the native faculty at Canton, when he was on his return homeward from his visit to Peking with Lord Amherst. He found them, however, not at all averse to instruction, as they expressed great satisfaction at the sight of some European plates of anatomy, and thought that a more acceptable present to the empire could not be made than some of the

same kind on a larger scale. With one department of anatomy, the Chinese seem to be perfectly familiar. They know the structure of the skeleton, and have names for every little bone in the body. The cause of this knowledge may perhaps in a great measure be attributed to the peculiar reverence in which the dead are held by the living, as enjoined by religion and national custom. They sometimes, as a mark of particular reverence, disinter their relatives and rebury them in more sanctified places. Mr. Davis mentions the circumstance of his having "stood by an old man while he was taking out one by one, and with the utmost solemnity, the loose bones from a decayed coffin; and, as he placed them separately in a jar, he made an exact inventory on a slip of paper, giving to each its proper place, that none might be omitted. The skull was put in last, and crowned this pious work, nor was a bone omitted, even to the phalanges of the hands and feet."

I remember one day going into an apothecary's shop in the Chinese part of the town of Singapore, and observing a number of bones neatly tied and strung together, hanging over the counter. Upon looking at them more closely, I found that they had belonged

to a species of black monkey, and were so nicely cleaned and carefully preserved, that a perfect skeleton of that animal might have been composed from them without the smallest deficiency. This did not imply a knowledge of the bones, but certainly a great deal of care and industry, for what, after all, was of no practical utility: the shopkeeper refusing to sell the package for any money, as he kept it, he said, for show.

With regard to Physiology, the Chinese do not appear to so great a disadvantage. Indeed, they claim a priority of knowledge of what we consider our greatest discoveries. The circulation of the blood, which so very lately has immortalized the name of Harvey in Europe, appears to have been familiarly known to the Chinese physicians for the last 2000 years. Its course through the arteries and veins is, however, the whole of their information on this subject, as they know nothing about its passing to and from the lungs for its purification.

The natural good sense, which is so very conspicuous in the writings of the men of genius in China, has often suggested such remarks as the following, which is taken from one of the prettiest of the Chinese novels, entitled "The Shadow in the Water." In order to account

for the resemblance between Yu-Kiuen and Chin-seng, a girl and boy who were often nursed alternately by the mothers of each, the author remarks, "It is said that the faces and figures of children are very much influenced by their nurses: which, perhaps, arises from the *connexion* between the *milk* and the *blood*. While they were together, being as yet infants, and without knowledge, this pair were unconscious of their resemblance to each other: but after the separation of the two houses, when they were old enough to have their heads dressed according to the different fashions of the two sexes, they heard people talking about their resemblance: their curiosity was raised, and they wished for an opportunity of making the comparison to see if what people said was true. But they were divided as completely as the north from the south, and there was no possibility of meeting."

The Chinese entertain the notion, but on what foundation it is grounded it is impossible to say, that the nose is the part of a person which is first formed in the ovum. From this idea the first ancestor of a family is called the nose ancestor, and the most distant grandson is denominated the ear grandson.

The low state of chemistry and of the knowledge of the materia medica in China, and the total ignorance of the science of botany, combine with the deficiency of anatomy and physiology to render the medical art vague and uncertain. The real principles of practice being deficient, it remains to see how far good luck and experience have supplied their place.

By some curious coincidence which has never been explained, it would appear that most nations have, at one time or other, considered that the heavenly bodies have an influence over, and connexion with, the affairs of men. We may smile at the present day, when we hear that in some countries the belief is still prevalent, but a very few years back it was in full force in our own country, and even lately attempts have been made to revive the notion.

The history of medicine furnishes repeated instances of the belief in the all-powerful influence of the planets over human infirmities, and we have merely to glance at any of our old herbals to convince us, that certain stars *then* presided over the plants which were most fit to effect their cure. Culpeper and others have arranged the vegetables in due order with this idea, so that Mars will be found at the head of

a list of hot and pungent, and Saturn or Venus of cold and tasteless herbs.

The improvement of the science in Europe has almost completely exploded these and other fanciful opinions, and we feel the full benefit of the change. China, however, has not been so fortunate. She still remains in the same state of darkness and ignorance in these matters, as we were in a century ago. Astrology forms a considerable part of the Chinese physics, and the five planets which they know are supposed to preside over the five viscera, the five elements, the five colours, and the five tastes. Thus Mars, who is said to be in nature hot and dry, takes to himself the most bitter medicines, which are red in colour, and when introduced into the system go directly to the heart. These five principles in nature assumed by the Chinese are similar to the Pentad of the European philosophers, Plato and Proclus.

Quotations from some of the most celebrated works on Chinese medicine will perhaps serve to show the absurdity of their doctrines better than any description. Thus, "all medicines which are *green*, are considered to belong to the element *wood*, and operate on the liver; the *red* belong to *fire*, and operate on the *heart;* the

yellow to *earth*, and operate on the *stomach*; the *white* belong to *metal*, and operate on the *lungs*; and *black* medicines belong to *water*, and operate on the *kidneys*. This is the doctrine of the five colours in nature."

The mysterious powers of the YANG and the YIN play an important part in this as in every other department of Chinese learning. These principles are derived from the revered source of the Y-king, and represent the active and passive agents, the male and female energies of nature. It is believed by these people, that every phenomenon in the universe may be explained by reference to these obscure and awful principles. Thus, "all medicines, on account of their properties, that are cold, hot, warm, and cooling, are said to belong to the YANG, or *male energy* in nature; while their tastes, as sour, bitter, sweet, acid, and salt, are considered as belonging to the YIN, or *female energy* in nature. Those, whose properties are strong, partake of the YANG principle; while those whose properties are slight, partake of YIN."

It would be a task of no great difficulty to show, that the doctrines of the Chinese science of medicine, however ridiculous many of them may appear, are not more absurd than many of

those which a few years since prevailed in the most civilized nations of the west; especially those which relate to the virtues of particular plants in the cure of disease. Thus, the notion current in England, some time ago, that the medical properties of vegetables were denoted by some external mark or appearance on them, is somewhat of the same nature as the following doctrine: "Of all roots that are produced, the upper half of what grows in the earth, is known to possess the property of ascending the system, while the lower half has that of descending. As to the power of branches, they medically extend to the limbs of the body. The peel, or bark, has influence over the flesh and skin; the heart (pith) and substance of the tree within the trunk, operate on the viscera. That which possesses light properties ascends, and enters the region of the heart and lungs; while the heavy descends, and enters the region of the liver and kidneys. That which is hollow promotes perspiration; that which is solid internally, attacks the internal part of the system; that which is hot, but decayed, enters the breath; that which is mollifying enters the blood-vessels. Thus, the upper and lower, the

internal and the external parts of medicinal plants, have each their correspondent effects on the human system."

Another very singular doctrine is founded upon the knowledge of the circulation of the blood, so long, although imperfectly, possessed by the Chinese. It is called the *doctrine of the pulse.* Duhalde, who has written very largely upon this curious subject, informs us that the Chinese physicians profess, by merely feeling the pulse in different parts of the body, to be able to ascertain the seat of a disease, with the symptoms and mode of cure. No questions or other means of inquiry are necessary, in order to gain a thorough knowledge of the state of the patient. They moreover pretend that they can discover in this way, whether or not a woman will be blessed with children, and whether the offspring will be of the male or female sex, and other equally obscure but interesting matters of inquiry.

It would appear as if the Turks and other Mahommedans in Europe and Asia entertained a similar belief: for at the present day, it is the practice of their physicians to prescribe for the ladies, after having carefully felt their pulse.

The patient is completely hidden by a screen, while the hand alone is thrust through a small sleeve made in it for the purpose.

The whole affair, however, is either far beyond our powers of comprehension, or the Chinese have arrived at the very acme of nicety and precision on this delicate subject. They say they can distinguish twenty-four different kinds of pulse by the touch, such as the hard, soft, the wiry, &c.; and assert, that each part of the body has a pulse peculiar to itself alone, and having reference to some distant organ of the body. Thus, there are three pulses in the arm, called the inch, the bar, and the cubit; and the pulse at the wrist of the left hand is in accordance with that of the heart, while the pulse of the liver is to be found higher up in the same extremity; and the pulses of the stomach, and of the lungs, are to be found in the same positions on the right arm. All these things appear so contrary to our notions of anatomy and physiology, that we cannot give credence to them for a moment, or believe that they are founded either upon reason or observation.

In addition to these fantastic theories, the Chinese physicians place great reliance upon

the choice of fortunate days and hours, and mix their art up with all the superstitious notions of the vulgar. We are informed likewise, that the subjects of his Imperial Majesty have resorted to the science of Mesmer for the cure of diseases, and that animal magnetism is frequently practised as a remedial agent.

CHAPTER VII.

The experience of a thousand years — Inoculation for smallpox—The moxa — Fashionable doctor — Want of sleep — Curious treatment — School of medicine—History of smallpox—Vaccination—Interesting sight —Jesuits — Mr. Gutzlaff — Patients at Whampoa—Affecting scene—Ophthalmic hospital at Macao—Canton hospital — Handsome-face painters—Dispenser—Native dishonesty—Dr. Parker — The missionaries—Philanthropy.

HOWEVER deplorable the state of the *science* of medicine may be at the present time in China, it cannot be denied that the native practitioners have yet much more success than might be expected from their small stock of knowledge. The experience of thousands of years must have brought forth something of general utility. The acuteness and observation of the Chinese have always been remarked, and some

of the greatest men who have ever existed have belonged to their country. We are not surprised, therefore, when we find that amid the chaos of confusion and absurdity with which the rationale of the profession is encumbered, there should still be found many practical and highly useful remedies.

That which stands deservedly at the head of these is the practice of inoculating for the smallpox, which has been the scourge of China from the time of the earliest records. It appears that for 3000 years this dreadful malady was allowed to run its course, before this mitigating remedy was introduced. One of the earliest of the patients who submitted to this plan of treatment, towards the close of the tenth century, was a young prince with whom it succeeded, and from that time its adoption became general.

The moxa is another of the remedies which has been introduced from China into Europe. It is supposed to have been learned at Batavia from the Chinese who traded there in their junks, and thence brought by the Dutch to Holland. It is thus employed by these people. From the stalks of a species of artemisia called *gae-tsaou*, which are bruised in a mortar,

the finest and most downy parts are selected. These are made into a light spongy cone, which being placed over the part affected, and set on fire at the apex, is gradually and slowly burnt down to the surface of the skin, producing a great degree of counter-irritation without much suffering.

Although the moxa was at first very extensively used in our part of the world, it is not at present so much confided in; yet it appears that the Chinese continue to use it as much as ever. So great a reverence have they for whatever is ancient, that when they say "it have very old custom," it is equivalent to telling you a history of its virtues. Dr. Abel found many Chinamen in every part of the country which he visited, who had a number of small eschars on their heads, which he had no doubt were occasioned by the moxa. They apply it likewise in all cases of local pain, and where there is any internal congestion.

Besides these remedies which we know to be founded on proper principles, it cannot be denied that some of the Chinese doctors have occasionally been very fortunate in general practice. A few of those residing in Canton have gained considerable credit among their

countrymen, and have excited the astonishment of Europeans by their success. Without a ray of science to illumine them, they have yet stumbled upon useful and valuable remedies. We can only account for this by the fact, that in the treatment of disease, the same cure may in many cases be produced by different drugs, and those of a nature totally opposite to each other. We have daily notices of this in our own country, and it enables us to account, in some measure, for the occasional success of nostrums and universal medicines in the hands of ignorant empirics.

Many useful and practical hints may often be picked out from among the mass of rubbish of which the Chinese books on medicine are composed. These are the result of reason and common sense, and must occur to every thinking mind. Thus, in a Treatise on Diet and Regimen, translated by Dentrecolles, the author shows the great importance of rest at night, thence inferring the very excellent maxim, that "one sleepless night cannot be compensated by ten nights of sleep." Some of the writers likewise show the importance of distinguishing between local and constitutional complaints, while others again seem to have a vague notion

of the exploded humoral pathology, in which every one believed some time back in England.

Indeed, there is scarcely a case of bad treatment by Chinese physicians on record, which may not be defended by one or other of the theories which have been in fashion at different periods in our own country. Sir George Staunton mentions the case of one of the suite of Lord Macartney, who laboured under a dysentery, for which one of the native practitioners administered large doses of pepper and ginger in distilled spirit. This plan of practice is so different from what we consider correct, that we should think such a medicine poison during that complaint; but it would be thought very proper by those who give stimulants in febrile and inflammatory affections, and much more in the present day by practitioners in homœopathy.

Notwithstanding the elaborate works which have been written on medicine by the Chinese, and the establishment, according to Amiot, of an institution expressly intended for its cultivation in the capital, we still find it in the wretched state in which it has been described, and its practitioners and their art held in very little consideration.

We have now to turn to a much more pleasant prospect. Having seen the miserable state to which the healing art has arrived, after thousands of years of unguided experience, we have now to view the benefit which the Chinese have received from the more enlightened people of the west. On this subject there can be no doubt, for even the vain and bigoted people themselves see it in the same light, and are truly thankful for the assistance.

The history of the smallpox illustrates in a curious manner, the reciprocal benefit which nations derive from each other. This dreadful malady is supposed to have originated among the Chinese, and to have spread westward in a gradual manner among the natives of Western Asia, until it became as prevalent with the people of Europe, as among those of the Centre Kingdom. The disease then ran its frightful course, unchecked by the ingenuity and resources of man; spreading dismay and horror wherever it appeared, and blighting the loveliness and beauty of the fairest works of the creation. As if in some measure to compensate the nations of the west for the dreadful gift which they had bestowed, the Chinese discovered, towards the close of the tenth century,

the mitigating effects of inoculation. This practice, by which it was vainly hoped that the original disease might be entirely eradicated, followed the same course, and soon became common as far as the shores of the Atlantic.

Disappointed in the hope of inoculation proving sufficient to stop the progress of the awful plague, it was still practised almost universally, as it was found to render the disease much more mild in its attack. There was something still wanting to render the victory complete. It is needless to mention the discovery, of late years, of vaccination by Doctor Jenner, and of its almost universal adoption throughout the greater part of the world. Although the practice of it cannot be said to be invariably successful, yet there is no doubt that it is one of the greatest boons which mankind has ever received, and promises fair, ultimately, to render the smallpox merely a matter of history: as a disease which had ravaged the world in former ages.

It would have been hard if the Chinese had not benefited by this operation, as they had led the way to its discovery. In fact, at the present time, vaccination is spreading in an extensive manner over the empire, while

the smallpox is every where yielding to its influence. It was introduced by Mr. Pearson, during his residence at Canton as principal surgeon to the British factory. It must have been a most excellent service which this gentleman rendered to the Chinese, as besides its more certain efficacy, it abolished the injurious method of inoculation practised by these people. They operated by soaking a morsel of cotton in the virus, and then introducing it into the nostril of the patient; by which means, when the poison took effect, it acted more particularly on the parts in its vicinity, and the eyes were thus frequently injured.

Dr. Abel, who was in Canton with the embassy of Lord Amherst, says, "Native practitioners have been appointed and educated under the eye of Mr. Pearson, and are taking from him the labour of inoculating the lowest classes of Chinese. I witnessed the operation in a temple near the British factory, on some of the children of hundreds of anxious parents, who flocked to procure the preservation of their offspring from the smallpox, at that time prevalent at Canton." And he exclaims with proper feeling, "If the internal government of China can free itself from national prejudices,

it will erect a monument of gratitude to the discovery of Jenner, and the services of Pearson."

The natives of the Celestial Empire have for a very long period allowed the superiority of the Europeans in medicine and surgery. They have constantly sought aid from the foreigners, and have always received it with the greatest liberality. There is little doubt that many of the Jesuits and other early missionaries understood the art, and made it the stepping-stone to rank and distinction at the court of Pekin, as a prelude to the propagation of Christianity. Perhaps it would be difficult for them to have devised a more judicious plan, or one more likely to ensure success.

Of late years, the greater number of the missionaries have understood more or less of the healing art, and have found it highly available to ensure the good wishes of the natives. That excellent Prussian, Mr. Gutzlaff, who is now residing at Macao, was always received wherever he went with the kindest feelings by those who had seen him before, and who again eagerly sought his prescriptions, although his skill was of the most moderate character. The surgeons who were in the employ of the East India Com-

pany frequently devoted their leisure hours, while residing in China, to the service of the afflicted natives, and generally with the most marked success. After the Company was broken up, these officers were no longer employed; and those who remained to practise in the towns of Macao and Canton had no fixed salary to depend upon, but their services were rewarded by the residents individually, as with us. Their time was, therefore, entirely occupied by attending to their own affairs, and they rarely could devote it to the Chinese.

The very lowest and most uneducated among the Chinese are sensible of the relief which they may obtain from English surgeons. The people near the banks of the river very often come off to the shipping at Whampoa, and no surgeon need be without these humble and solicitous patients. Frequently, when I have been walking on Danes Island, people have accosted me to inquire whether I were a doctor, and afterwards to make known their infirmities. Diseases of the eye and of the skin were those which chiefly came under my notice at this place, and I have since found that they are very prevalent throughout the country.

Often, upon looking over the ship's side, I

have seen boats come near the vessel, with two or three old men sitting quietly at the after part, while younger persons have had the management of the oars. For a long time I could not imagine what they wanted, nor understand the meaning of their subdued but frequent calls. Upon a nearer inspection, however, I have discovered that they were aged people, either totally or partially *blind*, brought by their dutiful sons to the foreigners, in hopes of finding relief from their afflictions. That person must indeed be dead to feeling, who could hear their plaintive, timid cries, and watch their sightless orbs turned towards him in helpless anguish, without pitying their condition, and being stimulated to afford whatever assistance might be in his power.

We cannot imagine a human being more miserably situated than a poor Chinaman afflicted with disease. The power of obtaining by his own exertions the scanty means of subsistence is, of course, entirely taken away. Very little reliance can be placed upon the charity of his countrymen; for although there are some receptacles for the infirm in and near Canton, yet it is rarely possible for a man living at any distance to gain admission into them. His

only dependence must be placed upon the devotion of his children, at whose mercy he is placed. Then it is that a man feels the effects of being blessed with children, who are bound by the strictest ties of duty and national custom to render him assistance. Generally, the hard-earned morsel of rice is eaten between them, but in times of scarcity or national calamity, the son can but helplessly look on, and share the common lot of misery and starvation.

Besides the slight assistance which can be afforded to the afflicted Chinese by the transient visitor or the resident surgeons, an hospital has been established lately at Canton, for the express purpose of affording them relief. It would be difficult to find a more praiseworthy institution: one which has for its object a more charitable and humane purpose. In addition to the relief which it is intended to afford to the infirmities of the people, it is hoped that ultimately it may open a way to the propagation of Christianity.

One Ophthalmic Hospital was opened at Macao in the year 1827, and continued in successful operation till 1832, "when the increased amount of practice among his own countrymen and other foreigners, occasioned by Dr. Pear-

son's return to England, compelled its founder to close its doors. In this short space of time, no fewer than *four thousand* afflicted Chinese were relieved from various maladies, and many were restored to sight."

The Hospital at Canton was opened in November 1835, for the purpose of affording relief in affections of the eyes; but since then so many Chinese have begged assistance for other complaints, that at the present time every class of diseases is attended to. The merit of founding this praiseworthy institution is due to an American Missionary Society, which originally furnished the means for its establishment, and sent out the gentleman who has the charge of the medical department. Since that period, general subscriptions have been received, and by that means the beneficial effects of the institution have been extended.

There is nothing, in my opinion, more interesting to the visitor to China at the present time, than the examination of this Chinese Hospital at Canton. You are able through its means to ascertain many things which would otherwise be buried in obscurity. The real state of medicine and surgery in the country, the nature of the diseases and accidents to which the Chinese are

subject, are the most obvious points of information to be gained, but there are others which do not appear so evident upon a hasty inspection. The character and manners of the people are here more fully laid open than elsewhere, in consequence of the intimate relation existing between the patient and his physician. Reserve is for the most part laid aside, and the real nature of the individual exposed in all its lights and shades, in all its beauties and defects.

The state of religion may also here be ascertained, with all the difficulties and dangers which attend the propagation of Christianity, against the express veto of the government. These several points are, I should think, interesting to the general reader, and therefore I purpose to give a detailed description of the institution, with the prospects and wishes of its supporters. During my stay in China I frequently visited the place, and took great pleasure in affording any little assistance in my power to Dr. Parker, the missionary surgeon, whenever any operations were to be performed.

The hospital is situated in a part of the great mass of factories which faces the river. The opening is in Hog Lane. After passing along this crowded, dirty thoroughfare, and entering

the door, you find yourself in a large hall paved with stone, having a few rooms on either side for domestic purposes. In a place like Canton, where such narrow limits are assigned to foreigners, it was impossible to procure a piece of ground fit for a new building; so that the hospital is merely a house forming a part of one of the Hongs. The funds of the institution are also at present very limited, so as not to allow any great extent of accommodation.

Besides this ground floor, there are only two others on the first and second stories, and each of these does not contain above three or four rooms. On the first floor is the receiving room, which is tolerably large and well furnished. Around the walls are arranged portraits in oil and water colours of some of the most remarkable patients who have been here treated, with their different appearances before and after the operation. Whether it is to be attributed to the skill of the native limners who execute these works of art, and who style themselves over the doors of their shops "handsome-face painters," I will not pretend to decide; but certainly many of these men and women appear as good-looking before as after the operation, notwithstanding the enormous

tumours and awkward blemishes which have been removed.

Two smaller apartments open into this large one. One of them is intended as a consulting-room for the examination of patients, while the other is fitted up as a dispensary, for making up and administering the medicines required. Two or three native doctors are employed in the house, one of whom has the office of dispenser. All the drugs are put under his care, and of course great trust is reposed in him. The youth I saw there appeared to be very intelligent, and likely to make a very good assistant, as he knew all the instruments required in the different operations, &c. A great deal of trouble and inconvenience, however, has been occasioned by these natives, as their honesty is not always to be depended upon. They have frequently stolen the medicines, and often when a particular instrument has been wanted in a hurry, it was not to be found. The expenses which would attend the employment of an assisting surgeon are greater than can at the present time be afforded; otherwise it would save a great deal of anxiety to the gentleman who has now the sole management.

Above, on the third floor, is the room where

the operations are performed, and two or three others containing beds for the in-door patients.

This small establishment, which bestows so much benefit on the afflicted, is, as I have mentioned, under the management of the Reverend Dr. Parker, by birth an American. He may now, however, be considered a self-adopted Chinese, for he has devoted his life to their service. The present state of the revealed religion in China will be mentioned hereafter, but it may still be necessary to say a few words in this place respecting it. At the commencement of the Tartar dynasty, the introduction of Christianity was tolerated by the Chinese government; the missionaries were respected, and frequently attained to great eminence as mandarins of the emperor at the court of Pekin. Subsequently, so many quarrels and petty bickerings arose between the priests of the different sects, which often broke out into violence and tumult, that the authorities were thoroughly disgusted with the whole set, and banished them from court, and afterwards from the empire. Two or three still remained at Pekin until lately, when the persecution had risen to its greatest height, and they were or-

dered to retire to Europe. There are a few native or foreign priests and monks of the Catholic persuasion still lurking about in the provinces, but they dare not openly avow their object or fulfil their avocation.

The introduction of any new religion into the Celestial Empire is now prohibited under the severest penalties, and any person discovered, even at Canton, in propagating novelties, would be immediately dismissed from the country. Under these unfavourable circumstances the greatest caution and secrecy are required, and it must be evident that the American Missionary Society has taken a very wise course to fulfil its purpose. Instead of increasing the hatred and prejudices which the Chinese already entertain towards the Fan-quis, by an open disregard and opposition to the laws of the land, they have proposed first to ensure the good opinion of the people, by their disinterestedness and superior knowledge, and then gradually to unfold their ultimate intention when the minds of the people are prepared. This was the course adopted by the Jesuits, and in their hands it proved highly successful. They entered into the Em-

peror of China's service as astrologers and scientific persons, and from their merit rose to eminence at the court, after which they were able to execute their mission with much more success.

The missionary chosen by the American Society has been educated for the purpose, as a surgeon and a divine. In this double capacity he left his country, bade adieu to his family and friends, under the express understanding that he should see them no more. His services are given gratuitously, and he evinces all the appearance of disinterestedness, as he receives no salary whatever nor is he allowed to accept a fee from his patients. Some of the richer Chinese, however, will insist upon sending some slight present or other, when they have received benefit from his skill. In that case it is converted to the service of the establishment. It may naturally be supposed, that the success of this mission depends as much upon the talents and integrity of the individual intrusted with its management, as upon the system on which it is founded. This is very true; and here we cannot but think, that the society has shown great judgment in its

choice. Dr. Parker is a man about forty years of age, is a very good surgeon, and appears to possess all the information which is required for his delicate office.

CHAPTER VIII.

Chinese hospital at Canton — Pleasing sight — Native patients—Ladies from Nan-king—Small feet—Rouge —The arched eyebrow—Obliquity of eyelids—Beauty —The hair — Married and betrothed—Dresses—Female colours—Extreme modesty—The twin-sisters—Close prisoners—Character of natives—Chinese gratitude — The Cheefoo's secretary — Opinion of the American—Ma-szeyay's poem—Number of patients—Prevalent disorders—Affections of the eyes—Of the ears—Cutaneous diseases—Tumours—Native surgery Bad cases—Contract between doctor and patient—Operations—Chinese fortitude—Moral courage.

It would be difficult to find a more pleasing sight than that which you may enjoy, by walking into the receiving room of the hospital at Canton, on any of those mornings when patients are admitted. The whole room is filled with native visitors, and frequently the passages contain many of the more humble suitors. On some of their countenances curio-

sity is depicted, as they examine the rooms and the strange appearance of the furniture. Others again have the pallid hue of sickness lighted up by the ray of hope; while again you may observe the joyful face of the convalescent, filled with gratitude and love. Those who have undergone successful operations grin with delight, and take every opportunity of exhibiting themselves to the strangers and giving them encouragement. You can see them every now and then go up and make their repeated salaams to the doctor, as they utter their unfeigned thanks, and often appear so delighted as to render themselves ridiculous.

It may naturally be inquired, to what class of persons do these Chinese belong? When the establishment was first opened none but those of the lowest orders came for relief, and even they lived in the immediate neighbourhood. However, as the fame of the institution extended, the rank of the visitors improved, and longer journeys were undertaken. At the time I was there, people came from very considerable distances, and were often of importance in their own country. Two young ladies were brought by their friends from the vicinity

of Nan-king, a distance of many hundred miles from Canton. They were both very pretty and interesting girls, the elder being about to be married, but prevented by an affection of the eyes; this was soon relieved and she returned to fulfil her engagement.

Many of the females of the upper orders whom I had thus an opportunity of seeing were very good-looking, and their small feet did not appear to a great disadvantage after being a little accustomed to them. Much more disagreeable was the practice of painting the face both white and red, so frequently adopted by those who did not seem to need any thing of the kind. This would appear to be a universal custom throughout the empire, as rouge is always to be found among the presents which a maiden receives on her marriage-day. The young ladies also take great pains to give the eyebrows a fine arched appearance. For this purpose they have the under part shaved away, so as to leave the remaining portion as thin and fine as a line drawn by one of their writing pencils, and this they compare to the new moon on its first appearance. This notion it will be recollected is not confined to the Chinese, although in our part of the world no artificial process is resorted to.

The beauty of an arched eyebrow is often alluded to in our old novels, and is mentioned, if I mistake not, in Shakspeare.

The native drawings on rice-paper appear to me in general very correct, when they represent the females of the upper orders. That peculiar appearance of the eyes with the internal angles very much depressed, which is said to be characteristic of the Chinese, is not at all so apparent in many cases as I had been led to suppose; many of the natives whom I have met with having it but very slightly, and in others I could not perceive it at all. The complexion of the females of the upper classes is by no means disagreeable, resembling that of the Spanish donzellas, and is relieved by the beautiful tresses of jet-black hair, which often hang down in clusters by the side of the head. This way of dressing the head is, however, confined to the unengaged damsels; for when they are married, or even betrothed, they wear the hair tied up in bunches upon the top of the head, and fastened in that position by long ivory or metallic pins very similar in appearance to knitting-needles. These project for some little distance on either side, and have frequently large ornaments fastened to the ends of them.

Artificial flowers, often very beautiful, are also to be seen occasionally encircling the temples, when the female is attired with more than ordinary care.

The dresses worn by the members of the fair sex in China are extremely rich, some of the most delicate colours being reserved for their use alone. The trousers are tied round the leg a little way above the ankles, so as to display to full advantage the *golden lilies*, covered with their highly ornamented shoes. The shape of the upper garments is very similar to that of the men, but they are more covered with embroidery. The long sleeves protect the hands from the contact of any thing that could injure the whiteness, or damage the long nails which project from the ends of their fingers. No pains are taken to display the shape of the body, although a slender waist is considered a great beauty. Indeed, it is impossible not to be struck with the extreme modesty and reserve visible in the whole of their demeanour. There is the same timidity and bashfulness about the Chinese maidens, as is so much admired in those of our own part of the world. They are unaffected children of nature, and therefore

often possess those higher qualities of the sex, which are held in such general estimation.

That these maidens frequently possess charms sufficient to captivate their native swains, may be inferred from the following quotation from one of the most popular novels. "As the father and mother were extremely plain and very stupid, so, on the contrary the daughters, were very handsome and particularly clever. After ten years of age, they began to resemble fair flowers glittering with dew, or fragrant herbs agitated by the breeze; and their beauty every day increased, until, having reached the age of fourteen or fifteen no one could behold them without emotion! Not only were the young men in love with them, but even those of a more advanced age, when they beheld them, confessed the power of their charms."

The hospital had been opened some time before any females of respectability applied for medical advice, and even now they show considerable hesitation before they will state their cases. Many also manifest anxiety lest their female friends should hear of their speaking to strange men, and consider their reputation dependent upon their secrecy. Such intercourse

is strictly prohibited by the severe rules of Chinese society, as the ladies are considered so inferior to the men that they are scarcely admitted as companions. By the customs of the country, the female is kept as a close prisoner during the greater part of her life, and it is considered a blemish in her character if she is even *seen* by any other man but her husband. Under these circumstances, it seems wonderful that we should find any women at all at the hospital, and it augurs well for the success of the system when we perceive one of the greatest obstacles already removed.

The fame of this institution will most probably travel along the course of the grand channel of communication, the Imperial canal. It has already, as we have seen, reached Nan-king the ancient metropolis, and at the present time the capital of literature; where we may suppose that the disinterested nature of its benefits are breaking down the barriers of prejudice and vanity, among the most enlightened people of the country. Ultimately, we should hope it will extend to Peking itself, when it may probably happen, that the great mandarins, or even the emperor himself, may be enrolled among the number of the patients; in which case, this

institution may prove the means of placing our relations with the Celestial Empire on a very different footing from that on which they stand at present.

The character of the Chinese appears to great advantage in the hospital at Canton. That low trickery and cunning, which they so often exhibit elsewhere, would be of no advantage to them when they come as humble supplicants. They are not bent on making money by petty traffic; therefore there is no longer need of that deception which is so often observed in their intercourse with foreigners. They tell their complaints to the doctor with simplicity, and follow his directions with implicit confidence. Gratitude, which is so rarely to be found among the children of the west, seldom fails to show itself in the breast of a poor Chinaman. They are truly sensible of any benefit they may receive, and generally try to evince their good feeling in more than mere words.

Presents are frequently sent by those who have been cured, but are for the most part returned, in order to make it clearly apparent that no selfish motive prompts the foreigners to do a good action. However, a Hong

merchant will sometimes send a chest of tea, or a gardener some of his choicest fruit, which they insist upon being accepted; in which case, they are put with the other stores of the hospital. Among the many instances of gratitude shown by these people to their medical adviser for cures effected, one or two may be mentioned as specimens of the whole. Lan Alin, a man aged fifty-four, had a tumour extirpated from the crown of the head. The operation proved perfectly successful, and he has since sent his son to the doctor, with "his ten thousand thanks."

The most interesting of all the cases, however, is that of Ma-szeyay, the private secretary to the chefoo of the district, who was afflicted with cataract, and had his sight completely restored by the operation of couching. The old gentleman's gratitude has ever seemed unfeigned, and when dismissed from the hospital, he requested leave to send a painter, to take Dr. Parker's likeness, "that he might bow down before it every day." He then wrote an ode, and transmitted it with some little formality: first, he sent a servant with a variety of presents; then a friend, who was equipped for the occasion, presented the ode and a gilt fan, with a quotation from

one of the best Chinese poets elegantly inscribed upon it by his relative.

This ode was translated into English by Mr. Morrison, and versified by a friend of the doctor's. The remarks with which it was preceded illustrate the ideas and feelings that he and other patients entertain respecting the hospital. I copy from the Quarterly Report now before me:—

"Doctor Parker is a native of America, one of the nations of the Western Ocean. He is of a good and wealthy family, loves virtue, and takes pleasure in distributing to the necessities of others: he is, moreover, very skilful in the medical art. In the ninth month of the year *Yihwe*, he crossed the seas and came to Canton, where he opened an institution, in which to exercise gratuitously his medical talents. Hundreds of patients daily sought relief from his hands. Sparing neither expense nor toil, from morning to evening he exercised the tenderest compassion towards the sick and miserable.

"I had then lost the sight of my left eye seven years, and the right eye had sympathized with it nearly half that period. No means used proved beneficial; no physician had been able to bring me relief. In the eleventh month of the

year above named, my friend Muh Keaeshaou introduced me to Doctor Parker, by whom I was directed to convey my bedding to his hospital. I there made my dormitory in a third story, where he visited me night and morning. First he administered a medicine in powder, the effects of which continued three days. He then performed an operation on the eye with a silver needle; after which, he closed up the eye with a piece of cloth. In five days, when this was removed, a few rays of light found entrance, and in ten days I was able to distinguish perfectly. He then operated on the right eye in like manner. I had been with him nearly a month, when the year drawing to a close, business compelled me to take leave.

"On leaving, I wished to present an offering of thanks; but he peremptorily refused it, saying, "Return, and give thanks to Heaven; what merit have I?" So devoid was he of boasting. Compare this, his conduct, with that of many physicians of celebrity. How often do they demand heavy fees, and dose you for months together, and after all fail to benefit! Or how often if they afford even a partial benefit, do they trumpet forth their own merits, and demand costly acknowledgments! But this doctor heals men at his own cost, and though perfectly

successful, ascribes all to Heaven, and absolutely refuses to receive any acknowledgment. How far beyond those of the common order of physicians are his character and rank! Ah, such men are difficult to find. The following hasty lines I have penned, and dedicate them to him." This doubly-translated poem, which I subjoin at full length, presents a few beautiful passages, and many which unintentionally verge upon the humorous; but pervading the whole there is a tone of feeling which is evidently genuine.

A fluid, darksome and opake, long time had dimm'd my sight,
For seven revolving weary years, one eye was lost to light;
The other darken'd by a film, during three years saw no day,
High heaven's bright and gladdening light could not pierce it with its ray.

Long, long, I sought the hoped relief, but still I sought in vain,
My treasures lavish'd in the search, brought no relief from pain;
Till, at length, I thought my garments I must either pawn or sell,
And plenty in my house I fear'd was never more to dwell.

Then loudly did I ask, for what cause such pain I bore;—
For transgressions in a former life, unatoned for before?
But again came the reflection, how of yore, oft men of worth,
For slight errors had borne suffering great as drew my sorrow forth.

"And shall not one," said I then, "whose worth is but as nought,
Bear patiently, as Heaven's gift, what it ordains?" The thought
Was scarce completely form'd, when of a friend the footstep fell
On my threshold, and I breathed a hope he had words of joy to tell.

"I have heard," the friend who enter'd said, "There is come to us of late
A native of the flower'd flag's far off and distant state;
O'er tens of thousand miles of sea to the inner land he's come;
His hope and aim, to heal men's pain, he leaves his native home."

I quick went forth, this man I sought, this generous doctor found;
He gained my heart, he's kind and good; for, high up from the ground,
He gave a room, to which he came, at morn, at eve, at night,—
Words were but vain were I to try his kindness to recite.

With needle argentine, he pierced the cradle of the tear;
What fears I felt! Soo Tungpo's words rung threat'ning in my ear;
"Glass hung in mist" the poet says, "take heed you do not shake;"
(The words of fear rung in my ear) "how if it chance to break!"

The fragile lens his needle pierced; the dread, the sting, the pain,
I thought on these, and that the cup of sorrow I must drain:

But then my memory faithful show'd the work of fell
disease,
How long the orbs of sight were dark, and I deprived of
ease.

And thus I thought: If now, indeed, I were to find relief,
'Twere not too much to bear the pain, to bear the present
grief.
Then the words of kindness, which I heard, sunk deep
into my soul,
And free from fear I gave myself to the Fan-qui's kind
control.

His silver needle sought the lens, and quickly from it
drew,
The opake and darksome fluid, whose effects so well I
knew;
His golden probe soon clear'd the lens, and then my
eyes he bound,
And laved with water, sweet as is the dew to thirsty
ground.

Three days thus lay I, prostrate, still no food then could
I eat,
My limbs relax'd were stretch'd as though the approach
of death to meet,
With thoughts astray—mind ill at ease—away from home
and wife,
I often thought that by a thread was hung my precious life.

Three days I lay, no food had I, and nothing did I feel;
Nor hunger, sorrow, pain, nor hope, nor thought of woe
or weal;
My vigour fled, my life seem'd gone, when, sudden, in my
pain,
There came one ray—one glimmering ray, I see—I live
again!—

As starts from visions of the night, he who dreams a fearful dream,
As from the tomb, uprushing comes, one restored to day's bright beam,
Thus I, with gladness and surprise, with joy, with keen delight,
See friends and kindred crowd around; I hail the blessed light!

With grateful heart, with heaving breast, with feelings flowing o'er,
I cried, "O lead me quick to him who can the sight restore!"
To kneel I tried, but he forbade; and forcing me to rise,
"To mortal man bend not the knee;" then pointing to the skies:—

"I'm but," said he, "the workman's tool, another's is the hand;
Before his might, and in his sight, men feeble, helpless, stand.
Go, virtue learn to cultivate, and never thou forget
That for some work of future good, thy life is spared thee yet!"

The offering, token of my thanks, he refused; nor would he take
Silver or gold, they seem'd as dust; 'tis but for virtue's sake,
His works are done; his skill divine I ever must adore,
Nor lose remembrance of his name, till life's last day is o'er.

Thus have I told, in these brief words, this learned doctor's praise,
Well doth his worth deserve, that I should tablets to him raise.

It is impossible to tell what may be the effects of having a number of such grateful, zealous friends spread abroad throughout the country, but it must evidently tend to render the name of Fan-qui much less odious than it is at present, and pave the way to the efforts of other workmen, whose labours may not be restricted to obtaining merely temporal advantages for these poor people.

A great number of the Chinese of all ranks visit the Hospital, for the purpose of seeing what kind of a place it is. Seven or eight thousand of these visitors have made their appearance at different times since it has been opened.

This must do good, for when they return to their residences in the country they inform their afflicted friends of what they have seen. More than two thousand Chinese had been under treatment at Canton when I was there, the greater part of whom had experienced a cure. It may be interesting to know the complaints which are most prevalent among the Chinese, as they will serve in some degree to illustrate the effects of national custom and peculiar habits upon the human organization.

Throughout the East, and in fact in all hot climates, the inhabitants are particularly liable

to diseases of the eye. In China, these complaints are very common, and very often deprive the sufferer of one of the greatest blessings of his life. On account of their prevalence, and the signal relief which may often be obtained by the skill of the European oculist, the Hospitals at Macao and Canton were opened at first for the cure of those complaints alone. The strong glare of light reflected from different objects, and the occasional intense heat of the atmosphere in China, are the principal causes by which we may account for these disorders in that country. The extreme dryness of the air, occasioned by the prevalence of hot winds during one half of the year, and its rarefaction from the same cause, will also assist to account for these disorders. Those who have been elevated in balloons, or made the ascent of Mont Blanc, have always found their eyes affected when the height to which they have mounted has made much alteration in the density of the air. In addition to these causes there is the plan of inoculating for the smallpox in the nose, by which blindness is often produced; but this practice is now vanishing before the improved system of vaccination.

Diseases of the ear are also very prevalent,

and may be attributed for the most part to the malpractices of the barbers, who, in addition to their usual routine of operations, insist upon cleansing the auditory apparatus. For this purpose they frequently use a sharp instrument, with which they cut or otherwise injure the tympanum, and thus bring on inflammation and disease of the more deeply-seated organ.

The great quantity of pork consumed by the middle classes, forming indeed the main article of their animal food, is supposed to be the cause of the general prevalence of diseases of the skin amongst them. We must look elsewhere, however, to account for the almost incredible number of cases which are to be found among the lower orders, who scarcely ever taste that kind of diet. Among the lower orders there is hardly a family to be found, without one member or the other, especially the children, being afflicted with complaints of this nature. There is little doubt that the cause of all this is to be found in the dirty habits of these people, who scarcely ever perform any process of ablution, and even wear the same filthy clothes until they fall to pieces from their backs. The case of these miserable natives is well worthy of commiseration, as by the laws of the land, if

the disease is even *suspected* to be of a contagious nature, they are deprived of their liberty, and often immured during the remainder of their lives.

These are by far the most common diseases, with which the foreign surgeon has to combat when he undertakes to afford relief to those whom the Chinese Emperor calls the "black-haired race;" with the exception of the *tumours*, which are very prevalent at the present time, and often acquire enormous dimensions. Operations are daily performed for the extirpation of these excrescences, but it will be a long time before their number will appear to diminish, for you can scarcely meet with a poor Chinaman who has not one of a small size about his person. These are taken no notice of, until, by their increase, they occasion inconvenience. It is impossible to determine with certainty, whether the Chinese are really more subject than other people to these affections; but it is probable that to the want of the knowledge of surgery among them these large tumours are to be attributed. In other countries they would be removed before they attained any size, and thus escape general observation.

Those disorders which are most prevalent

among the people of China having been mentioned, it is not necessary to mention those which are of rare occurrence. With the exception of those of the eye, inflammatory affections are not at all frequent, neither have they many fevers or other acute diseases. This is to be attributed in a great measure to the scarcity of animal food, and the usually temperate mode of living.

The department of native surgery is even more defective than that of medicine, and may fairly be denied to exist at all in the Celestial Empire. It seems wonderful that a practical people like the Chinese, should have altogether neglected that which must have been comparatively clear and straightforward, and have dabbled continually in the obscure and profound. It may be, that they have been prevented from performing dangerous operations by the fear of becoming accidental homicides, and thus incurring the pains and penalties of the law as deliberate murderers; but surely this consideration would not prevent them from setting a broken bone, or reducing a dislocation. Whether there may be any difference in the state of this art in the northern provinces we have no means of ascertaining, while we have abundant evidence of its wofully neglected state in the vicinity of

Canton. It is on this account that so many poor wretches are pronounced incurable by the foreign surgeons, and that we find so many real objects of charity in the streets.

Some of the cases which are brought to the hospital are very curious and instructive, as they show the natural course of unchecked disease: the very farthest limit to which it may be carried without depriving the sufferer of life. These facts, rather too minutely described I should fear for the general reader, are yet highly interesting to those who wish to understand the state of our relations with China, as it must be evident what a great blessing these poor people are now enjoying, and what an influence it ought to have upon their narrow-minded prejudices.

It remains but to say a few words about the way of conducting the operations, which are, of course, very frequent in this boundless field of accumulated disease. Before any step of importance can be taken, it is necessary to guard as much as possible against future troubles; and this gives rise to very singular contracts between the doctor and his patients. As the unjust laws of the Chinese government at present stand with regard to foreigners, accidental

homicide is punished with the same degree of severity as deliberate murder. The mandarins it would appear, rarely search into the cause of death from accident, unless the relations of the deceased insist upon the inquiry. In order, therefore, to avoid being brought under the clutches of the Chinese law—before any serious operation is performed, which might, from unforeseen circumstances, cause the death of the patient—the doctor makes the relations sign an agreement, by which he is absolved from all responsibility in case such an unfortunate issue should result. The grateful people make not the slightest objection to this plan, which is now become a matter of course; nor is there the slightest reason to believe, that they would ever turn the well-meant efforts of the foreigners as weapons against themselves.

On these trying occasions, when generally the stoutest heart quakes with dreadful anticipation, many of the Chinese show the greatest fortitude. They have repaired to the operating-room with a firm and steady determination, when often their friends have been absorbed in grief without the room; thus showing that they have *moral*, if they are without *physical*, courage. They in general submit quietly, and require

very little confinement by bandages or attendants. I assisted Dr. Parker one day, to extirpate a tumour, weighing nearly a pound, from the side of the neck of a female forty years of age. Although the operation required some minutes before it was completed, being situated in the midst of the great vessels and nerves at the back of the jaw, the patient did not express the slightest impatience, and only once showed that she was sensible of the pain by drawing in the breath between her teeth.

This state of quietude under operations must not, I feel assured, be always attributed to fortitude in the patient, as in many cases there is present but a very slight degree of sensibility to suffering. There are many different degrees, no doubt, of this lethargic state of the body, but in general, I should think that it is in a ratio to the degree of cultivation of the mind of the individual. This subject deserves to be investigated; but at present we know that the savage American warrior smiles with disdain at the puny efforts of his enemies to torture his captive body, while the highly-polished European shrinks from the slightest touch, and feels uneasy and disturbed, if but a leaf be doubled under him as he lies upon his bed of roses.

CHAPTER IX.

The merchant sailor—Want of judicature—Rendezvous at Canton—Jack's taste—Sam-shu shops—Incongruous names—Coffee-shops—Natives of Canton—Depravity—Squeezing—Ma-tse—Extortion of mandarins—High treason—Seaport towns—Value of a dollar—Native honesty—Egg-house people—Hard case—The City of Refuge—Origin of Tân-kea—Laws and regulations—The Oranbadjoos—Character of crimes—Arson—The great fire at Canton—Lord Anson—Ghos-pidgeon—Fanaticism—Chinese pickpockets—The passage-boats—The Fan-qui outwitted—Battle-royal—The track of vice—Hog Lane.

WHAT a singular animal does a merchant-sailor appear, when he is seen ashore for the first time after his voyage! A more ridiculous human being can scarcely be imagined. Those feelings of goodwill which the British public have generally borne towards this class of persons, from the knowledge of their importance, in a country whose wealth is dependent

upon commerce, and whose safety is ensured by wooden walls, would very quickly vanish upon a more intimate acquaintance. Even a Dibdin would then fail to excite an interest for these degenerate sons of the ocean.

The seamen belonging to the navy are, however, far superior to those of the merchantmen, as they are kept under much more strict *surveillance*, and are punished severely for the slightest fault. The power of the captains of trading vessels is at present so limited, and the responsibility of bestowing deserved punishment for even the most serious offences, so great, that the sailor is often left almost entirely to his own guidance. This was more especially the case in China, where there were no resident European authorities to take cognizance of offences committed on board the Indiamen. The native laws with respect to foreigners are so cruel and arbitrary, that delinquents are not subjected to them if it can possibly be avoided.

The grand rendezvous of the foreign sailors at Canton is that beautiful place Hog Lane, which opens into the square before the Factories, immediately opposite to the usual landing-place. On account of its being a small court which runs backward between the masses of the

foreign factories, its original designation is supposed to have been Hong Lane. However this may be, it certainly deserves its present title, as a more filthy hole can scarcely be imagined. All the vice of Canton seems to be concentrated in this part, which swarms with the very lowest of the low. The Gin Alley of Hogarth is perhaps the place with which it may most properly be compared, as it often presents scenes of equal depravity.

The houses are small and crowded together, the greater part being shops fitted up expressly for the foreign customers. Some contain the coarser sorts of earthenware which are palmed upon Jack as the finest kinds of porcelain. In fact, the most common and tawdry articles of every description are manufactured expressly for the purpose. Natives also carry about large trays filled with trumpery nick-nacks, which would scarcely serve to amuse a child in England, but which are eagerly bought by the sailors and preserved with the greatest care. The grand object with the tar when he gets ashore, is to find out the place where he may obtain something to drink, and if he is pleased with his entertainment he rarely moves from the spot until he has spent all his money. The

Chinese know this well enough, and are therefore well prepared to accommodate him in this respect. Many of the shops are fitted up for the sole purpose of selling spirituous liquors, while the goods in the greater part of the others are of secondary importance, and serve merely as a cloak to hide the real nature of the business.

In no place is the tar better taken care of than in Canton. That part which the women and publicans of Shadwell and Blackwall perform towards him, is here admirably played by the Chinamen. He is the complete dupe of the more cool and intelligent natives, who appear to be greatly his superiors. He is a mere baby in their hands, and they treat him as they would some huge unwieldly animal, whom they may make sport of at a distance, but with whom they must avoid coming into close proximity. Every sam-shu shop is arranged with the ordinary neatness of the natives, but exactly conformable to the vulgar taste of the customers. The landlord has generally some attractive title by which he is known to the foreign sailors, and this is painted over his door in large English characters. It has been given to him by the sailors in the

height of their conviviality, and as a mark of great esteem. Many a Chinaman, therefore, can boast of a Christian name by which he is well known in the neighbourhood. In addition to the incongruous appellation of Good Tom, Jack, or Jemmy prefixed to the real name of the shopkeeper, you will often see short sentences added, which are intended to catch the eye of the passenger.

The spirit sold to the sailors in these shops is manufactured near Canton, under the name of sam-shu, but is generally vilely adulterated with deleterious ingredients. This poisonous compound produces a very speedy effect, and renders the sailor who has taken it so absurdly frantic, that he becomes the sport of the more cautious natives, and a prey to those pickpockets and vagabonds who crowd around him. Coffee-shops and eating-houses are frequented by the more steady seamen upon their first arrival, but they usually finish the day by adjourning to the sam-shu shops.

In a place like Canton, where the population is immense and the corruption of the magistrates so great, it might naturally be expected that there should exist a considerable proportion of depravity among the people. It is impos-

sible to tell how far the system of bribing the mandarins to overlook offences is carried, but there is little doubt it must be very extensively practised. The way in which smuggling transactions are carried on has been mentioned, where the magistrates are privy to the whole affair. Indeed, although it may well be allowed, that it would be impossible to prevent the commission of a great many offences; still it may fairly be asserted, that to the vile manner in which the laws are administered in this city, the greater part of the depravity of all classes is to be attributed. It is considered a great promotion for a mandarin to be transferred from any other province to Canton, on account of the increased emoluments of the office. This does not consist in having a larger salary from the government, but arises from the wider field opened for that species of extortion denominated *squeezing*.

Almost every kind of corporal punishment may be commuted by an infliction on the pocket, and as the amount of the fee for this extenuation is often at the option of the mandarin, a door is thus opened to the most abominable practices. So much advantage is derived from this nefarious system, that many

of the magistrates depend more upon the profits thus obtained than upon the salaries allowed by government. These are sometimes merely nominal, while it is well known that large sums of money are given by those who wish to farm these offices as a matter of speculation. The squeezing system is therefore, you may be certain, carried to its fullest extent, and woe be to the unfortunate wretch who gets into their clutches. As the hound, when it has once tasted the blood of a person, will never rest until it has torn him to pieces, so fixes the mandarin upon his victim; for when he has once touched the dollars, the offender is never afterwards safe from his rapacity.

A case of this kind I witnessed while I was at Canton. A poor fellow, named Ma-tse, had been once in very comfortable circumstances; but was reduced, from having accidentally incurred the displeasure of the che-foo, to the most destitute condition. He now lurks about the town, afraid to show his face, and where he will finally lay his head it is impossible to say. So completely are the people in the power of these officers, that it has sometimes been discovered, that respectable persons have been

waylaid by them, and forced into the holds of vessels, or other secret places, where they have been kept in durance, until they have paid largely for their liberation. Others again have been subjected to torture for the same purpose, and have been prevented from making their cases known to the superior authorities, by their persecutors holding the threat, that they will impeach them of high crimes and misdemeanors.

Indeed, it is almost impossible to avoid escaping from the grasp of these merciless overseers; as instances have occurred, where the inferior officers of justice have actually inflicted wounds upon their own persons, and then sworn before the magistrate, that they received them from the man whom they have chosen to point out. This accusation is very difficult to be parried, especially when the judge is corrupt; and it amounts to treason, according to the sweeping nature of the law in this matter. The poor prisoner is therefore very glad to be let off with his life, and the confiscation of either the whole, or the greater part of his property. The only safe course is one which is now pretty generally adopted. It is that of avoiding any display of whatever wealth is amassed; and hence it is

that in this city so much less grandeur is observed than might be expected from its known resources.

With this abominable corruption of those whose office it is to administer the laws, many other causes combine to render Canton fertile in vice. The temptation to roguery is very great, for silver abounds in this city, which is undoubtedly one of the richest in the empire. The quantity of money accumulated by individuals is sometimes enormous, and the shops and houses are filled with the most costly goods. In seaport towns besides, the standard of morality is, in general, considerably lower than in others situated more inland, on account of the great influx of foreigners, who do not feel so scrupulous as the natives about infringing the laws. This is particularly the case in China, where the regulations with regard to the Fanquis are both severe and unjust, and therefore, a merit is sometimes made of breaking through them.

The example alone of the foreigners is injurious to the manners of the Chinese; but the natives are, of course, continually tempted by the prospect of reward to administer to their vices, and thus their own morals quickly become de-

teriorated. A dollar is a great temptation to a starving wretch, who can exist on it for a month. The natives are besides taught by prejudice to consider the Fan-quis fair game; as barbarians whom they may cheat and pilfer with the greatest propriety. The chicanery among the tradesmen, which exists throughout the country, is carried to its greatest extent when they have to do with those whom they despise. Habits of deception thus formed, are not to be repressed; and the Chinaman soon tries his arts against his countrymen as well as the strangers.

To this list of concurrent circumstances, which favour the growth of crime in Canton, may be added the vicinity of the river, upon the surface of which exists a class of people, who are of such an inferior race, that the lowest peasant on shore would consider it a disgrace to be allied to one of them. These Tân-kea, or boat-people, condemned by the ruthless hand of fate to wear the badge of infamy, are treated as a distinct people from the Chinese, and have laws and regulations expressly framed for them. The petty river-mandarins go amongst them as lords and princes, and

insult and trample upon them at their pleasure.

One afternoon I saw one of these poor men paddling slowly along in his san-pan, making his way quietly towards some boats, which were moored near the bank on the opposite side of the river. He was a fruiterer, with his small stock of vegetables arranged in tempting order in the bows, while he sat and pushed forward his little shop at the stern. From the imperfect glance which could be gained of his countenance from under his enormous umbrella-hat, it appeared as if he was eyeing his tempting store, hardly able to refrain from immediately satisfying his craving appetite by one hearty meal. But his resolution seemed to triumph, and he waited until, having sold his property, he should be then able to indulge the natural inclination with far more satisfaction. For this purpose he redoubled his efforts to reach the expectant customers on the other side of the water. But he was destined to be disappointed; and rather to reproach than to pride himself upon his well-meant forbearance.

A small mandarin-boat happened to be stationed near the place, and the man in authority

was at the window. His grave, forbidding face was turned slowly from one side to the other, as he tried to espy some pretext for squeezing the poor wretches who were paddling about in his neighbourhood. The costermonger's little san-pan caught his observation, as it passed slowly across the stream at a little distance. From closely scrutinizing the downcast visage of the man, the mandarin's eye rested upon the fruit, which was of very fine quality. Without taking his eyes from the vegetables, he called to the poor man in an authoritative tone, and as he slowly approached he made his selection.

When the san-pan was alongside, the supercilious Jack-in-office, picked out the finest part of the greengrocer's property and put it into his own boat, and without deigning to cast a look at the half-starved wretch to whom it belonged, he merely nodded his head as a signal for him to begone. During this time, the injured man was afraid to look up, but hung his head in the most dejected attitude, while his whole body shook with terror. As he moved noiselessly away he gradually recovered himself; but waited until he had got to a considerable distance before he ventured to

devour the poor remains of his stock in trade, lest he should be seen by the mandarin, and probably incur the misfortune of a bambooing in addition to the squeezing.

Although the egg-house people are, most probably, as well inclined to virtue as their neighbours on shore, still on account of their wretchedly miserable condition, they are thought to be more addicted to crime. Poverty is held to be a vice here as elsewhere, and on that account it too often leads to its commission. It is believed that in the town of boats at Canton, the most abominable excesses are carried on, which could not be tolerated on land by any stretch of magisterial indulgence. There is little doubt too, that numbers of abandoned wretches resort to the suburbs of the city to commit their depredations, and then take to the water when they are in danger of being arrested. In this way the "Floating Town" may be considered in the same light as the London Whitefriars of olden time, or that portion of Paris which is so graphically described by Victor Hugo, in his novel of Notre Dame. It is probable that there exist combinations to withstand the authority of government in this City of Refuge, but certainly there

would be a considerable difficulty in apprehending a delinquent, if once hidden among the intricacies of the mass of floating huts, computed at 80,000, which cover the water for some acres in extent.

The origin of the Tân-kea, or egg-house boat-people is a mystery, at the present day, and their history is involved in considerable obscurity. They may probably have found their way to China many ages back, by coasting along the shore from some distant country; as by tradition they are said to have rather suddenly made their appearance, by passing up from outside the mouth of the river. Although some centuries back there appears to have been as many as 50,000 boats, yet this species of population was entirely neglected by the former Chinese emperors, who forbade these poor creatures to land, or to have any intercourse with the people ashore.

Even now, the Tân-kea are utterly despised, notwithstanding one of the late emperors of the present dynasty naturalized them, and allowed them to live ashore, as soon as they had acquired sufficient property to purchase a small estate. This is the general law at the present time, although there are many minor ones to regulate their conduct in other matters.

They are exempted from most duties to government, on account of their wretchedly poor condition, but most probably from the difficulty of collecting the revenue from such a wandering tribe. The policy of keeping them to their element, until they are able to live comfortably ashore, may be good, as it must act as an incentive to industry, and prevents the land from being overrun by poor people of erratic dispositions.

There is another race of people who very much resemble the Tân-kea. These are the Oran-bad-joos, whose habits and appearance are very similar. These poor savages live altogether in covered canoes, in which they rove about the coasts of New Guinea, obtaining a subsistence from the fish which they catch in great abundance at the mouths of the rivers. Although, from the personal appearance, and a degree of similarity in language, it would be difficult to distinguish the parent stock from which the other was derived; still from some considerations it appears probable, that the Oron-bad-joos are derived either from the Tân-kea, or from natives of some part of the coast of Asia. They have traces among them of a religion, which is evidently a mixture of Buddhism and Mahommedanism.

Under these circumstances, when we find that there is every incentive and opportunity to commit crime, and of warding off the consequences if it be detected, it would be strange indeed if Canton were not to contain many rogues and vagabonds. On account, however, of a long course of domestic slavery, and the peaceable system of the government, the people have become cowardly and mean-spirited. The nature of the offence committed is therefore of a dastardly character, with scarcely an instance of those bold and terrific ebullitions of passion, which are found in the annals of crime of most other countries. The offences are in general such as may be committed with impunity, on account either of the defenceless state of the parties who are wronged, or the general confusion created.

The most serious of these crimes is that of arson, which is supposed to be committed much oftener than it can be detected. The city abounds with vagabonds, who set fire to the houses in order that they may profit by the confusion, to commit their depredations. Fires are very frequent in Canton, and are sometimes so extensive as to threaten the total destruction of the town.

The foreign Hongs have once been completely burnt to the ground, together with the greater part of the suburbs. This extensive conflagration, equal in magnitude to that of the Fire of London, occurred in 1822, and was finally repressed by the most active exertions of the foreigners. When Lord Anson was in China, a similar calamity occurred, and it was chiefly on account of the aid which his seamen lent to the townspeople, that he gained the goodwill of the Chinese authorities.

Notwithstanding these repeated calamities, by which thousands of people are suddenly rendered houseless and destitute, it is singular that so little precaution should be taken by the natives to prevent their recurrence. The houses in the suburbs are almost invariably built of wood, and as there is always a great quantity of even more combustible materials about the premises, there is no telling to what extent the conflagration may be carried when once it is excited.

Besides the destruction which is occasioned by the deliberate acts of incendiaries, there is no doubt that many accidents of this kind arise from the gross neglect of the householders themselves. They seem perfectly careless of the

consequences, but throw the fire about in every direction. Crackers are almost constantly exploding by hundreds in every corner, while flaming ghos-paper is bandied about the apartments. Before every image of the pagan deities at the corners of the streets, sticks of incense are continually burning, which are made of the aromatic powder or dust of the sandal-wood.

It may be, that all this carelessness with regard to fire is to be attributed to excess of superstition. If the people make it a part of their religious duties to burn papers to Shang-ti, we cannot tell whether they may not consider it impious to take too much pains to prevent a greater illumination. Stretching this idea a little farther; if we were not certain that the Chinese care little for their religion, but perform a mere outward devotion, and would not be put to the least terrestrial inconvenience about it, we might suppose:—that the acts of the incendiaries were instigated by religious fanaticism; and that the Celestial enthusiast would look on with pleasure at the glorious blaze which he had created, and adore his Maker in a manner consonant with his own enraptured feelings.

In the noble and scientific art of picking a

pocket, the Chinese stand deservedly pre-eminent. This practice is not confined to London alone, but the same facilities are afforded in the crowded, narrow alleys of Canton. This natural advantage is not at all neglected, but the business is carried on to a great extent, and often with a degree of ingenuity and address, which would afford a lesson to those of the fraternity in the west. Robberies are committed equally upon natives and foreigners, and they are especially practised in the square before the factories, where the country-people stand to gape at the Fan-quis. On board the passage-boats, which ply between this city and various ports near the mouth of the river, the company is so motley, and crammed into so narrow a space, that persons have noticed a large placard stuck up against the mainmast, bearing the ominous inscription of "Kin-shin ho paou" or "Mind your purses."

A favourite resort of these light-fingered gentry is Hog Lane, where they congregate and thence sally forth to commit their depredations. The systematic arrangement which is practised by these people to deceive the sailors is complete, and often ends in the most serious disturbances. Jack will not be

gulled in too open a manner, but generally shows a disposition to resent any affront put upon his understanding.

As a party of seamen, who have just come from the boat, saunter up the dirty alley, they are usually accosted by one of the natives who are crowded around, or by the owner of one of the wigwams. The tar cannot resist the familiar salutation of "Fine day, Jack," or "How you do, old boy?" but seizes, with hearty good-will the hand which is extended towards him. The Chinaman pretends to recognise an old acquaintance whom he has not seen for a long time, and insists upon his taking a glass of sam-shu. The natives are very abstemious themselves, and therefore have the entire advantage over the strangers. After plying the seaman with the abominable liquid until he is almost senseless, the Chinaman easily induces him to lie down to sleep, when his pockets are deliberately emptied, and he is put out into the court to finish his slumbers. When he awakes, he has a vague recollection of the circumstance, but cannot at all remember in whose hovel it occurred.

The gross impositions which are sometimes attempted by the Chinese, when they fancy

their customers are overcome by liquor, induce the latter to resort to the only means in their power of punishing them. The Jack-tar is always too ready, tipsy or sober, to use his fists, or any convenient weapon which comes in his way. In this manner have arisen the most serious disturbances, which it was out of the power of the native police to repress. All the sailors in the town have come to the succour of their messmates, while the natives have been in too great numbers to be easily routed. Many of these battles-royal have ended in the death of several persons on both sides. The Chinese do not always get the worst in these encounters, as the working classes at Canton are remarkably strong-built and muscular, and have all their energies directed by the most complete self-command and *sang-froid.*

After a certain time in the day, Hog Lane is rendered impassable to orderly people, and the career of dissipation extends in a line from its entrance down to the water's edge. Near the landing-place are probably one or two individuals intending to return to their boats, but who have had just liquor sufficient to render them quarrelsome. You see them walk about, insulting every

one whom they come near, kicking over and trampling upon the heaps and circles of bird-seed which are laid out upon the ground for sale, under the care of a quiet, peaceable Chinaman. The native tries to persuade the drunken men to keep off, but this having no effect, he contents himself with piling the seed up afresh as soon as it is knocked over.

The next group which you see as you near the factories is a party of blackguard natives surrounding a drunken sailor, looking at his eccentric vagaries as they would at the clowns in the theatres. As the brutal fellow reels about they roar with laughter, and shout as they scamper away when he makes a sudden rush in any direction, or clap their hands with glee when he falls like a senseless log upon the earth.

As I looked one day into Hog Lane itself, the scene of depravity increased in intensity. Some of the seamen were stretched upon the ground, sleeping off the effects of their debauch; others were sitting upright against the walls, with their pallid faces hanging upon their breasts, and their eyeballs fixed on vacancy. Mixed with them were the natives, taking advantage of their helpless condition to

jeer and mock them, or to force upon them their trumpery wares. Others of the sailors danced or reeled about, uttering at the same time the most blasphemous oaths and disgusting speeches. One man was singing a vulgar song, but was interrupted by receiving from one of his companions a blow on the face, which was aimed at a a passing Chinaman. This accident created a general uproar, in which, very quickly, both natives and foreigners were engaged, and was not terminated until many wounds and bruises were inflicted, and the drunken men laid upon the ground.

Such scenes as these are highly disgraceful, and must tend to lower the foreigners in the eyes of the native authorities; while the common people must look upon the foreign sailors as so many insensate beasts, whom they may fleece and deride at their pleasure. Attempts have been made, I understand, to put down the sam-shu shops, but without success, as there is little doubt that the mandarins share in the spoil.

CHAPTER X.

Burglaries in Canton—Back streets—Mixed crowd—Native barbers—The Parsees—Coolies—Beggars—Lepers—Cripples—Cheap music—Noisy duns—Heavenly Flower Society—Poor-laws in China—Charitable institutions—Imperial generosity—Cheap living—City police—Wicket gates—Watchmen—Chinaman and his lantern—Large nursery—Espionnage—Governor Le—Official reports—Responsibility—Imperial edict—George IV.—Chinese government—Political sermons—Petit treason—Maxim against Maxim—Public examinations—Literary perseverance—The Son of Heaven.

BURGLARIES and robberies of dwelling-houses are not so frequent in Canton as might be expected, from the nature of the premises and the rich goods contained within. As you walk through the narrow streets in the suburbs at the back of the factories, you are struck with the very exposed condition of the articles intended for sale. There are, generally, no fronts

to the shops, and the valuable goods are piled up in apparent confusion within, and are often made to project into the causeway. Boards are fastened up over the doors, having large gilded characters upon them, with the name of the tradesman, and his appropriate motto.

Each little square is occupied by some petty dealer or other who arrays his wares on the ground, or carries them about on a tray supported by straps passing over his shoulders. Pails and buckets containing live fish may often be seen, ranged by the side of baskets of vegetables and living animals. Every place is crowded with buyers and sellers, while the motley passengers edge and squeeze past each other to get on.

As you stand in one of the shops you can quietly observe them as they proceed, and may fancy that you are placed in a booth at a fair, and that all the tragic and comic actors have turned out amongst the crowd, and are passing in review before you. The uproar and noise of so busy a scene can scarcely be imagined, mixed as it is with the occasional explosion of crackers, and the dulcet sound of penny-trumpets and kettle-drums.

The natives form, of course, the principal

part of the assembly, as they clatter along in their thick-soled shoes, or loiter to gape and stare at the tempting goods in the shops. The barbers may be seen moving slowly by, with their travelling apparatus slung across their shoulders on the end of a stick. The importance of this class of persons may be inferred from the number who get their living by the business, as it is estimated that there are upwards of seven thousand in the city of Canton alone. These itinerant shavers fix their shops wherever they find a customer, if the space will allow, and then proceed to perform a variety of operations upon him. The only surgery known in the country is practised by these men; so that here, as was the case a short time ago in Europe, there exists an honourable fraternity of barber-surgeons.

The foreigners form a strange contrast to the other pedestrians, as their dresses are totally different. The Parsees, however, look very well: their loose flowing robes and high caps harmonizing with the clothing of the natives. But the Europeans do not appear at all to advantage, in my opinion; as their tight, fashionably-cut clothes, and formal black hats, seem paltry by

the side of the flowing garments of the Chinese and Mussulmans.

As the foreigners make their way among the crowd, they are continually inconvenienced by the coolies, who press forward with their heavy loads, uttering at the same time a peculiar cry to make the people clear the way. However disagreeable this ceaseless interruption may be, the warning is seldom neglected; but great agility is often required in order to prevent receiving a rough blow on the head, from the projecting corners of the burden. At certain hours of the day, and during busy times, the stranger who is unaccustomed to the place is under the necessity of standing jammed against the wall for some little time, while several of these porters are passing; as they then follow each other in such rapid succession, that the whole of the thoroughfare is occupied.

Those, who understand the locality, step aside quietly into the shops, but the new-comer jumps at the moment to the wall, and probably finds himself unwillingly in juxtaposition with a beggar. Not more unpleasantly situated than this person, was the poor wretch, who upon climbing up a tree to avoid being tossed

by a mad bull, suddenly found his progress arrested by the sight of a chimney-sweeper, whom in his terror he believed to be the "Gentleman in Black" himself. Uncertain what course to pursue, he dared not advance or retreat, but eyed the one and the other alternately with an inward shudder. Thus the stranger is obliged to examine the Chinese beggar, while feelings of pity and aversion successively come over him: pity for his misfortunes, and aversion for his loathsome, filthy condition.

It may be that he has fallen in with a leper: an ill-starred mortal, whose fate it is to be cut off from communion with the rest of his species, because he is afflicted with a contagious disease. The poor man sits down in a secluded corner, covered with ragged garments made of matting, and is too abject a creature to dare to look up. He is content to crawl about like a dog, and to satisfy the cravings of his stomach, by devouring the garbage which has been thrown away by his more fortunate countrymen.

The ordinary beggars of Canton, to which class great numbers belong, are far better provided for; and may be considered independent in a manner of those by whom they are supported. It would appear that a certain number

only were privileged to beg, like the former king's beadsmen of Scotland, as every one is found to be a real object of charity. The greater number are blind or crippled, and are led about by their children; others are afflicted with the most disgusting ailments, which they take good care to expose to the public. In addition to which, they are most filthy in regard to personal cleanliness, and have a boldness and effrontery which render them much more disagreeable than they would be otherwise.

They generally carry some kind of musical instrument about with them, and one would imagine that the great art consisted in choosing that which is the most annoying. With these wretched instruments in their hands they often congregate together, and produce an extemporaneous concert, much inferior to the worst with which we are regaled in the streets of London.

Whenever a foreigner is seen to enter a shop, the door is almost always surrounded by five or six of these miserable creatures, who hope to excite the compassion of the stranger, and thus gain more by his single donation than they would from dozens of their own countrymen. These paupers are a great interruption to busi-

ness, from the incessant noise which they make to attract attention, by beating together two pieces of bamboo which they hold in their hands. This they are allowed to do by law, and no shopkeeper can turn them away without giving them alms. So regular a custom is this, that the tradesmen always keep a quantity of tchen, the lowest coin, ready at hand, so as to give one of them to each of these sturdy beggars. No advantage is gained by relieving them too quickly; for as soon as they leave others come and supply their place. The shopkeepers themselves seem, by long habit, to have got over any dislike they may have had at first to these droning, monotonous sounds, so that they turn a deaf ear to them. They would let the beggars knock till doomsday ere they would relieve them, if they were not afraid of losing their Fan-qui customers, who are rendered half frantic by the sound, and would rush out of the shop to find some quieter resting-place.

It is very probable that the Canton beggars are regularly organized among themselves, and subject to laws of their own framing, as in England in the time of Bamfylde Moore Carew. One company is well known to exist, which is called "The Heavenly Flower Society," and

is supposed to comprehend one thousand members. In no city in the Chinese empire are there so many beggars as in Canton, so that it would be very unfair to take this town as a specimen of the whole. The expense of supporting them would appear to rest almost entirely on the shopkeepers, whose profits must be very great, to enable them to bear up against the many fines and extortions to which they are subjected.

No poor-laws exist in China; but it must be evident that the above system of compulsory benevolence is intended to answer the same purpose. There are a few houses of charity, however, in and near Canton, which assist to relieve the public from the burden. The most extensive of these is called the Yang-tse-yuen, and is situated in the suburbs to the east of the city. This institution is an asylum for aged and infirm people who have no relations to support them. Although the sum of 5100 taëls of silver is said to be annually bestowed upon it by the Emperor for its support, the money is raised by imposts on the rice which is brought by foreign ships to Canton.

Another building, which most probably was erected by the humane for the purpose of pre-

venting in some measure the crime of infanticide, is also assisted by a donation of 2522 taëls per annum from the Emperor. It is situated near the former, and has accommodation for about three hundred foundling children. There is one other institution known to the foreigners, and this is a hospital for lepers. Why a more scanty provision should be made for these poor creatures than others, it is difficult to say, but this house is reported to be maintained at a cost of no more than 300 taëls a year; that is, about a dollar per annum for each person, as there are more than three hundred patients within the walls. It is a matter of curious inquiry, why there should exist more objects of distress in Canton than in the other large cities of China. It may be because it is the richest; as we invariably find the same thing in the most wealthy towns of other countries. The extreme of poverty may always be found in the immediate vicinity of the most princely affluence.

In such crowded, narrow allies, as we have seen to exist in the suburbs of Canton, filled with persons of every class and occupation, who brush against the rich articles exposed for sale in the shops, it might naturally be expected that robbery could be committed by the

evil disposed with the greatest impunity. But this is not the case, and it is rarely that any thing is lost by the tradesmen. The Chinese are as quicksighted as any people in the world, and, accustomed to trickery themselves, are able to guard against it in others. Five or six men are also employed in one shop, so that there are always some spare people to keep a good look out. Their neighbours besides have a fellow-feeling with them on this point, and give timely notice of the approach of a suspicious person.

The city police is perhaps the most efficient of any at present existing, and the arrangements are so well made, that it is almost impossible for a detected offender to escape from justice. The narrowness of the streets facilitates the plan, for at the ends of each of the passages are placed wicket-gates, which can be closed in an instant upon the first cry of "Stop thief!"

China Street and other large thoroughfares have strong gates at their entrances, with small doors in them for the passage of a single person at a time. During the night all these barriers are closed, and the suburbs may then be considered as resembling one large house, with its hundred doors guarded by watchful

porters. Police soldiers are stationed in each of the passages, and keep regular watches, which they indicate by the sound of the drum or gong beaten at proper intervals. The hour of the night is made known by every watchman either thumping the pavement forcibly with his bamboo, or striking two pieces of the same hollow wood together with his hands.

The regulations with regard to passengers are most strict, as they are not permitted to pass the gates, without giving an account of themselves, or paying a small fee. Indeed, they are not allowed, properly speaking, to be out at all, excepting in cases of the most urgent necessity. Each person is required to carry a lantern with him, having his name inscribed in large letters upon it, and is liable to punishment if he neglects this precaution. The foreign residents are not exempted from showing this sign of their upright intentions; for if you meet one of them in the street at night, you will invariably observe him preceded by his native servant, who lights him along with one of these many-tinted lamps.

Such a system of police would never be tolerated under any but the most despotic government, but must be very suitable to that of the

"Son of Heaven," who sends his black-haired children to bed at a regular hour, and insists upon their behaving themselves quietly and orderly in their nurseries. A Chinese town, therefore, during the hours of darkness, is as noiseless as a churchyard, and presents a great contrast to many cities in Europe, where the night-time is the season of jollity and amusement.

In addition to these excellent regulations for the preservation of the public peace and security of property, there are other plans put in force in this country, which are almost exclusively Chinese. These are the systems of espionnage and responsibility. Persons are sent about the towns and country, whose sole business it is to watch the proceedings of the inhabitants, and to deliver in regular reports to the authorities. A strict watch of this kind is kept over the proceedings of the Fan-quis, and their slightest movements are reported to the viceroy, who sends a statement of them to Peking.

The latter gentleman, commonly called Governor Le at Canton, is not always very particular about adhering to the truth on these occasions, especially when an affair which has occurred in his province, does not redound

to the honour of the country. Thus, when the foreigners are at all unruly; as when they will not submit to the laws of the land by delivering up to Chinese justice a man whom they consider innocent; the emperor is taught to believe that the Fan-quis have been very submissive on the occasion, and that the offender has undergone his punishment.

Indeed it is astonishing what garbled accounts are sometimes transmitted to the capital, and received without hesitatiou by his Celestial Majesty. He is often made to believe that his army has been victorious, when the soldiers have suffered the most signal defeat; and when rebels have been bribed to disband, they have been represented as totally cut to pieces. The reasons for this conduct are very apparent. If the mandarin sends good news he is honored and rewarded, but if the intelligence be bad he is disgraced and ruined.

According to the constitution of the government, each officer is responsible for the good conduct of those people whom he has under his charge; so that if any disturbance should break out among them, it is attributed to his ill government, and he is punished if he be unable to suppress it. This system is carried so far, that if the emperor hears of any great crime having

been committed, even by a single individual, who was not discovered and punished immediately, he makes the whole of the officers of that province suffer for it in proportion to their rank. Those of the highest class are punished the least on these occasions, as they are properly enough considered less blameable than those under whose immediate observation the offence was committed.

The foreigners have no great reason to complain of being subjected to severe restrictions, for if we consider the condition of the Chinese people themselves, it will be evident that they are under much more strict *surveillance*. The strangers are secured by those Hong merchants with whom they deal, and if they misbehave themselves, these men are subjected to punishment. With the children of Hân, every offender involves in his crime, and casts a stain upon, not only his own family, but all his relations and kindred, and even the memory of those who have gone before him. Masters are responsible for the actions of the people whom they hire, and even of those who are placed beneath them in office. The following case, in illustration, was translated by Sir George Staunton from the newspaper which is published regularly at Peking, under the immediate superintendence of

the Emperor. It forcibly shows what injustice may be committed, under a despotic government, on an innocent person of rank and importance, for the mere breach of decorum of one of his dependants. It also furnishes a specimen of the mandates of the Emperor.

"4th and 5th of the 4th Moon, of the 6th year of Kia King. [May 14th and 15th, 1801.]

IMPERIAL EDICT.

"On our return from the Imperial Tombs, which we visited on the occasion of quitting our habits of mourning, we met with a man on horseback, in the district of Whang-ma-tien, who galloped to and fro in our presence with great apparent haste. The officers in waiting, having apprehended the offender, and investigated the circumstances, it was found that he was an attendant on Mien-ko, Prince of Tchuong-ching. Animadverting on such extraordinary and irregular behaviour, we direct that, in the first place, the offender shall be committed to the custody of the Tribunal of Crimes, where he shall be punished with the bamboo, according to the law against insolent and unruly conduct in the Imperial presence; and that, secondly, Mien-ko shall resign his

post as General in the Army and Member of the Supreme Council, but shall continue to enjoy the rank and title of Prince of Tchuong-ching, in token of our indulgence towards him. We, however, abstain from a final decision of the affair, till we receive the result of the deliberations of the Tsoung-zin-foo, or Tribunal for Affairs affecting the Imperial Family.

"KHIN-TSE."

This last word is always added to official orders from the Emperor, and means "Let this be respected."

A European monarch, it is most probable, would act very differently if placed in the same circumstances. The punishment would certainly not extend beyond the offender himself; for we may remember the anecdote of our late sovereign, George the Fourth, when young. Walking out one day at Cowes, he came against a man who had insolently placed himself in the path, and would not step aside to make way for him. He did not hesitate a moment, but knocked the fellow down with his fist and then quietly walked on.

It is well known that the fundamental principle on which the Chinese Empire, that

immense realm, containing no less than 300,000,000 of people, is knit together in the bonds of society, is that of paternal authority. From the Emperor down to the meanest peasant, one and the same system is in operation; and if we may judge from the general tranquillity of the nation, the rare occurrence of great crimes, and the general prosperity, it may fairly be allowed to work well. The Chinese, under this legislation, are industrious and happy, but are at the same time totally unwarlike.

As the father is responsible for the acts of the son, and bears a part of his shame and punishment, it is but just that he should exercise a control over him, to prevent him from ill-doing. This gives rise to the whole of that domestic slavery, which is intended to strike at the very root of error. A man is a slave to his parents until he himself becomes a father, when he has his own children to obey his commands. A woman is never free from restraint.

To instruct the people in the laws of the Empire is a part of the duty of every magistrate, and in addition, they have to exhort them particularly to the observance of their domestic

duties. Thus, the magistrates of every district, as they are also the priests of the state religion, deliver a kind of moral sermon to the people at the period of every new and full moon. This discourse is usually taken from the "Book of Sacred Instructions:" a standard work, compiled from, and founded upon, the works of Confucius, Mencius, and others of the great men of antiquity.

Of the style of this composition, a judgment may be formed from the following specimen:—"Upon every daily occurrence, upon what is given or received; upon all the affairs which concern the family, whether important or trivial, the seniors ought to be respectfully consulted by the juniors. At their meals they ought to be unassuming; in conversation submissive; walking, they ought to make way; standing or sitting, they ought to take the lowermost places; that thus their observance of what is due by younger brothers to themselves, may be made manifest in all things. A stranger, when he is senior by ten years, is served like any elder brother; a senior by five years is considerately attended; how much more then is respect due to a senior, who is of the same blood and family! Therefore, next to a

failure in filial duty, is a failure in fraternal duty. The duty to parents and the duty to elders, are indeed similar in obligation; for he who can be a pious son will also prove a dutiful brother; and he who is both a pious son and a dutiful brother will, while he dwells at home, prove an honest and obedient subject; and while engaged in active service abroad, a brave and faithful soldier."

This preaching would have, I should fear, as little effect on the evil-disposed as that in our own country, in softening the nature and improving domestic manners, were it not backed by the strong arm of the law. All the effect of the discourse is, therefore, to give the listener due notice, and make him dream of the kia and the uplifted bamboo. A breach of these regulations amounts in Chinese law to *petit treason*, which is considered one of the greatest crimes that a person can commit.

As these maxims are chiefly short sentences taken verbatim from the most revered authors, they are, in general, highly respected; but this does not prevent their being quoted one against the other, in the same way as proverbs are bandied about in some parts of Europe. In the pretty novel of "The Twin

Sisters," the father and mother cannot agree upon the young men to whom they may give their fair daughters in marriage. "Upon this the good man said, 'It is a maxim, that a woman, before her marriage, must obey her father, and after it her husband. Now, with respect to my daughters, I, being their father, it is their duty to be guided by me; and, with respect to yourself, I being your husband, have a right to control you. What is the reason of your behaving in this manner?' She immediately replied, 'It is also a maxim, that in the marriage of a son, the father is to have the direction, but in the marriage of a daughter, the mother. If the former were our case at present, then indeed you might do as you pleased; but as we are now concerned about the latter, I, as a matter of course, have the sole right to command. Under what pretence, then, do you meddle with my affairs?'" This domestic squabble nearly ended in blows at the time, and was finally referred to the mandarin.

Every father being the ruler of his own household, and responsible for the good conduct of the members, the scale ascends until it reaches the supreme authority. Ten houses in a town constitute a kea, while ten kea make a paou: or

in other words, ten houses are a tithing, and ten tithings make a ward. An officer superintends each, until we arrive at the governor of a city or district, a deputy viceroy and a viceroy, and finally the members of the council, and the ministers of state.

All these, and the greater number of the other government appointments, are filled by those persons who have distinguished themselves by literary attainments. Thus promotion in this country is, or is intended to be, the reward of merit, and the state secures for its own service, if not the most virtuous, certainly the most gifted individuals. Talent and industry meet with their rewards in the Celestial Empire, and the meanest peasant may eventually become the most trusted counsellor of his sovereign.

There are a few classes of people, however, who are considered too mean and debased to serve their country in any capacity. These are the menials, the comedians, and lowest agents of police.

In every part of the country, the people are instructed in those branches of knowledge which are considered the most essential, and exhorted to apply themselves strenuously to the cultivation of letters. In every parish

throughout the provinces public examinations are held by the literati, at which any person is allowed to compete, if he belong not to one of the classes above mentioned. Attaining honour in this his first attempt, he is eligible to make trial of his abilities at the examinations of the district, and passing through this ordeal, he is then permitted to try his fortune at the more important assemblies, which are held at stated periods by the viceroy and other head mandarins of the province.

The following quotation from the *Horæ Sinicæ* may show the zeal manifested by some poor people to obtain knowledge.—" Che-yin, when a boy, being poor, read his book by the light of a glow-worm, which he confined; and Sun-kang, in winter, read his book by the light reflected from the snow. Though their families were poor, they studied incessantly. Chu-mai-chin, though he subsisted by carrying firewood round the town to sell, yet carefully read his book. At last he became capable of, and filled a public office. Sun-king suspended his head by its hair to the beam of the house, to prevent his sleeping over his book."

There is little doubt that the merit of the different competitors is generally decided with

the greatest impartiality, as the magistrates are continually shifted from one place to another, and no one of them can preside over his native district. To ensure fair dealing also, the themes and poetical effusions are delivered by the students in writing, without any signatures attached to them. According to the honours gained at these public examinations the student obtains rank, and becomes eligible to accept equivalent government appointments; so that the whole of China may be said to resemble one vast university, which is governed by the scholars who have been educated within its walls.

Such a system would be likely to produce wise and able statesmen, but certainly would not be a successful plan for rearing bold and enterprising generals. From the successful candidates in the provinces the members of the Hân-lin college at Peking are chosen, and the latter have the pleasing task of appointing persons to fill the vacant civil situations, and from amongst their own number are chosen the prime ministers of state.

Although it cannot be denied that such a system of government is not successful at all times in preventing abuses, the principles on which it is

founded are excellent. Neumann gives the following opinion in the preface to his very interesting little work:

"The translator of the History of the Pirates ventures to affirm, that the Chinese system of government is by far the best that ever existed in Asia; not excepting any of the different monarchies founded by the followers of Alexander, the government of the Roman Prætors and of Byzantine Dukes, or that of Christian Kings and Barons, who reigned in various parts of the East during the middle ages. The principles of Chinese government are those of virtue and justice; but they are greatly corrupted by the passions and vices of men. The greater part of their laws are good and just, though the practice is often bad; but unfortunately this is generally not known to the "Son of Heaven."

CHAPTER XI.

Mandarins—Chinese punishments — Mild jurisdiction—The bamboo—Court of justice—Infliction of blows—Thanking the judge—Female offenders—The leather flapper—Consideration shown to women—The kia, or cangue—Imperial clemency—Alleviation of punishment—Ty-yo, or hell—Prisons—Chain, handcuff and fetters — Torture — Criminal judges — Capital punishments—Chinese executioner — Strangulation — Polite request—The Ling-chy.

THE slight sketch which has been given will, it is hoped, be sufficient to give an idea of the *structure* of the Chinese government; it remains therefore, but to say a few words with regard to the laws, and the mode of punishment which is adopted at the present day.

When an offender is apprehended, he is taken immediately before the mandarin, and punished on the spot, if the nature of his offence is trivial, and the case requires no

deliberation. The magistrate, or his deputy, is always in attendance, so that there is no needless loss of the time of the prisoner, but he receives his allowance, and goes to his labour again as soon as his bruises will permit him.

Chinese punishments are very simple, and totally different from those which were generally imagined in Europe. From their well-known ingenuity in other matters, it was readily believed that these people employed the same talent in framing instruments of torture. Every account of these curious machines received full credit in the west, together with many other things equally untrue, until more modern investigations were made, which altered the public opinion.

At the present time, many of the painters at Canton make a great deal of money by drawing terrific pictures on rice-paper, and selling them to the foreign visitors, who are ready enough to believe the natives capable of any kind of cruelty. Whether these barbarous instruments of punishment were ever in use at a former time may be a matter of doubt, but certainly they are not at present in existence. I am inclined to think, that the mandarins encourage the publication of these monstrous productions,

many of which are really barbarous, in order to instil into the minds of the people, a due degree of respect for the power of the law; but more especially to overawe the Fan-quis, whom they hope by this means to keep in good order.

With some exceptions, the whole system of legislation is of the mildest and most humane character, and acts much more by exciting shame and by intimidation, than by severity of punishment. It is very probable, therefore, that when a man has committed an offence of a heinous nature, or where an example must be made of one individual, the person is either put to death in an easy manner, or sent to a very distant country, while accounts are circulated among the people, of the horrid tortures inflicted upon him by the executioner. Even the ordinary punishments ordained by law may be lessened by the payment of money, and the number of blows with the bamboo are always nominally greater than those which are inflicted.

The barbarous torments depicted on the rice-paper, and which have often been supposed in Europe to be the real tortures inflicted on unfortunate Chinese, are many of them well known to be entirely imaginary, and founded

upon the religious notions of the natives. The Buddhists believe that there will be rewards and punishments hereafter, and therefore rack their brains to devise fitting torments for the damned in the infernal regions. The painters exercise their invention in the east, on the same subjects as some of our most celebrated poets of the west; and no doubt the Chinese let their countrymen as much into the secrets of the future world as ever did a Homer, a Milton, or a Dante.

The bamboo is an instrument wielded by the authorities alike over the high and the low, in the same manner as the schoolmaster brandishes his cane to keep the boys in order. Besides this universal panacea for all moral disorders, there are the cangue, and the leather flapper. Imprisonment, squeezing, banishment, and finally death, make up the sum total of Chinese punishments in ordinary cases. As in every other country, however, crimes of extraordinary magnitude draw upon the offenders equally severe and unusual penalties. Except in these uncommon cases nothing like barbarity is observable; while even the bamboo, with which the blows are inflicted, is not chosen at the

option of the magistrates, but its size, its shape, and even its weight, are most accurately determined by law.

Any person who visits China may have an opportunity of witnessing the punishment of the bamboo. The foreigners occasionally have to take a thief, or a sam-shu seller, before the mandarins; but it is not at all unfrequent for them to be present accidentally during the administration of justice. It takes place in a very public manner, and they may therefore be attracted to the spot by the cries of the sufferer.

The mandarin is generally seated behind a small table on which are writing utensils, with which his secretary or clerk takes minutes of the name and offence of the prisoner. The magistrate himself has always a grave, solemn countenance, and attends to the indictment and evidence, with a mildness and patience which must greatly favour the execution of justice. As he sits thus, dressed in his rich clothes, and surrounded by people who pay him every mark of deference, the stranger cannot fail to look upon him with a degree of respect which he would scarcely have anticipated. When the offender is brought in, he is made to kneel on the other side of the table opposite his judge, and is then strictly

guarded by officers, who wear high-crowned caps, and who always precede the dignitary when he rides in his sedan.

After the accusation and witnesses have been heard, the magistrate pronounces the sentence, finishing by taking out a certain number of slips of bamboo from a jar which is placed on the table before him. These are thrown down upon the ground, and by the amount of them, the executioner knows the number of blows which are to be inflicted. The ceremony is then very quickly concluded. The offender is ordered to lay himself with his face downwards on the ground, and if he shows any unwillingness to submit to the chastisement, the officer twists the queue at the back of the head two or three times round his wrist, and then quietly puts him into the required position.

The bamboo is a long, flat piece of wood, broader at one end than the other, and is nicely trimmed and polished. The officer holds it by the smaller extremity, and strikes the blows with a standard degree of force. When the punishment is completed, the culprit is made to kneel again, and is then obliged to thank the magistrate for the infliction before he is allowed to depart. This singular custom is always re-

peated, and is somewhat similar to the practice of the Roman Catholics, when penitents are expected to bless the priest for ordering them to do penance. Although the sincerity of the Chinese may sometimes be doubted, this practice must still have a tendency to give the people a proper notion of the law; and to convince them that no feeling of personal malice or revenge has actuated the decision of the magistrate.

Women are not exempted from undergoing corporal punishment for their misdemeanors, although it is of a different kind from that which is borne by the men. They have to kneel in the same manner before the mandarin, when, if convicted, they do not change their position, but the officer strikes them a certain number of blows on each side of the cheek, with a pear-shaped instrument made of a solid piece of leather. The Chinese in this instance have a consideration for the more delicate structure of the fair sex; and the female offenders have likewise an advantage over the male, in being subjected to much milder treatment, immediately after their apprehension. For instead of being put into prison, where, in addition to much suffering, their morals would in all probability be

injured, they are put under the charge of their friends, who confine them in their houses, and, as they are responsible for their appearance on the day of trial, they never fail to look well after their charge.

Excepting in the neighbourhood of Canton, where the temptations to crime are so very great, and the morality of all classes is at a very low standard, women rarely come under the eye of the magistrates. With the exception of the lower orders, the female leads a very secluded life, and has rarely an opportunity, however willing she might be to embrace it, of committing an offence greater than that of disputing the will of her lord and master.

The next instrument of punishment which it will be necessary to mention, is the kia or cangue. It is a small, moveable pillory, made of a square block of hard wood, usually 3 che long and 2 che 9 tsun broad, and weighing in ordinary cases 25 kin. The che and tsun may be said to correspond in some measure with our foot and inch, whilst the kin or catty is a weight of twenty ounces, and may therefore be taken roughly for a pound. There is a great deal of difference, however, in the size of the cangue used on different occasions, no doubt depending upon

the nature of the offence committed, as some have been noticed of one hundred pounds, and that which poor Aming had to carry was said to be full three hundred pounds in weight. Pity for the sufferer, however, might in the latter case have led to exaggeration among his friends.

When we come to consider the nature of the kia, it will be seen that the actual number of ounces of which it is made, is a matter of no trifling consideration to the poor Chinaman who is obliged to wear it. The cangue very much resembles a small thick table, having a large hole in the middle for the head, and a smaller one on either side for the hands. When properly fastened on, it bears a degree of rough resemblance to a frill or collar; and as it is often the punishment for great people, it must form a strange contrast to the court beads, which but a short time before hung gracefully from the neck.

Pasted on the board, on either side of the face of the prisoner, is a long strip of paper, containing a written account of his name and rank, and of the offence for which he is punished. As the hands are securely fixed in the wooden frame, there is no possibility of raising

them to the head, so that his friends are obliged to feed him, in the same way as they would an infant.

As this punishment is inflicted with the intention of producing shame much more than actual suffering, it cannot be denied that it is a most excellent device for that purpose. It would be difficult to imagine a man placed in a more helpless or humiliating position, exposed to the gaze of every passer-by, and without even the privilege of a country bumpkin seated in the stocks, of holding down his head to hide his shame and confusion.

The peculiar advantage which this kind of pillory has over others is that of being moveable; so that the criminal may be paraded through the streets, or made to remain for a definite length of time, close to the spots where his crimes were committed, or to the place of his former pride and magnificence. Some unfortunate criminals are condemned to wear this badge of infamy during life, and are then considered to be immensely indebted to imperial clemency for sparing their lives. Existence must be sweet indeed to him who can be thankful for it under such circumstances, when accompanied with the inward knowledge of guilt,

and every outward mark of shame and degradation!

Although the weight of the cangue must at first be of secondary, it would soon become of primary importance. The burden which the prisoner has to sustain upon his back, or to carry about with him, would appear to be a sufficient punishment of itself, but that the law allows of his freeing himself in some measure from his load. No temptation can induce the mandarin to ease him from his pillory altogether; but by the payment of a sum of money, he is allowed to hire one or two coolies or boys, to stand by him and support the wooden frame upon their shoulders.

This privilege is of the same kind as that, where the number of blows with the bamboo are lessened on the payment of so many taël of silver; and as these rates are always suited to the rank and circumstances of the person, there would appear to be nothing unfair in the practice. It cannot be denied, that by this system a door is opened for the corruption of the mandarins; but it must be remembered, that in no case can the corporal punishment be altogether dispensed with, however much it may be mitigated, and the richest and most

influential offenders are made to taste the bamboo or the kia. The Chinese set a due value on money, and, therefore, must suffer mentally in parting with it, as much as they would bodily by retaining it. So that the squeezing system merely tries the nature of the individual: the prodigal eagerly sacrificing his silver to save his skin, while the miser would cheerfully suffer his limbs to be cut asunder rather than part with a dollar.

The places in which the prisoners are kept, previous to their trial for capital offences or after their conviction, are, in general, so very uncomfortable, and the regulations so strict, that the Chinese fear them much more than the threatened punishment. They call these places of confinement, Ty-yo or *Hades*, as they cannot imagine any thing more wretched in the nether world.

As there is no *habeas corpus* act in China, any poor wretch may be arrested at the pleasure of the mandarin or his officers, and thrust into one of these loathsome dungeons, made probably like a cage, and so small that there is no possibility of sitting, standing, or lying down. Very heavy penalties are imposed upon those mandarins who are convicted of false imprison-

ment, or who cannot sustain their accusation against a person; but this does not prevent a great deal of underhand work, practised for the sake of extorting money.

The instruments allowed by law to confine criminals consist of an iron chain, weighing five kin, and the fetters weighing one kin, for those who are destined to banishment or capital punishment. The handcuffs, which are made of dry wood, are only applied to the wrists of capital offenders of the male sex. The nicety with which these instruments are directed to be made, show that the framers of the laws have provided for every thing with the most minute accuracy, and that nothing is left to the will and caprice of the gaolers, if they obey their instructions.

Formerly the torture was very much used for the purpose of wringing confessions from the criminal; but, as in Europe, it is very rarely resorted to at the present day. The only cases in which it is employed, are those in which treason is suspected, and the object is then to obtain information of the supposed accomplices. Males and females are alike subject to this treatment, but the fingers of the latter are operated upon instead of the ankles. These

parts are enclosed within a triangle, made by crossing three pieces of bamboo. As the wood is drawn together by strings held by the officer, the required degree of pressure is produced.

The criminal judges in the provinces have the power of inflicting all the punishments above detailed on their own authority, and can also banish a man to any distance; but they are not allowed to put a prisoner to death, without an express command from the Emperor. Some few crimes are, however, so much feared by the government, that the offenders are despatched in the most summary manner. Piracy is of this nature, and it is asserted in the Canton Register, that one Chinese executioner beheaded a thousand pirates in one year.

When, therefore, a judge has capitally convicted a felon, he sends up a report of the case to Peking, and waits for further orders. The Emperor consults the Grand Judicial Board, and then sends down an Edict for the execution of the criminal on an appointed day. In general, the convict is kept in prison until the autumn, when he undergoes his sentence in company with others.

The Chinese think a material difference depends on the manner in which a person is put

to death; and even the Emperor believes that he is performing an act of great mercy, if he allows a man to suffer by strangulation, when he has been doomed to be beheaded. Strangulation is the lightest of all capital punishments, and is usually performed by the common executioner. It is said, however, that his Celestial Majesty sometimes shows a particular mark of regard to one of his former favorites, when he sends him, like the Sultan of the Porte, a silken cord; requesting him at the same time, to do him the favour of tying himself up with it to the next convenient post or pillar.

Foreigners never have an opportunity of witnessing these executions: they are, therefore, very much in the dark as to the way in which they are conducted. They know that decollation, or beheading, is considered more disgraceful than strangulation; but are unable sufficiently to determine the nature of the Ling-chy, a death accompanied by some peculiar severities, but which the English sailors fancy to mean, the cutting into ten thousand pieces.

CHAPTER XII.

Banishment—Attachment to native place—Hall of Ancestors—Neglected tombs—Emigrants—Tartary—Employment of exiles—The cold country—Goose-tail—Transportation to Elee—Siberia of China—The Leu Lee—Laws for foreigners—Homicide—Tân-kea—Tartars—Ma-out-tse—Chin-tchew men—Law of high-treason—The Son of Heaven—Petit treason—Partiality to foreigners—The old, young, and afflicted—Family feuds—Cursing a thief.

All the punishments have now been described but that of banishment. This must be very severe to a Chinaman, rooted as he is to his native soil. The place to which the offender is sent depends upon the nature of his crime; as the exact number of lee which he has to travel is regulated with the greatest exactness. A *lee* is nearly equivalent to three of our miles, but varies somewhat in each of the provinces. Some people are sent but twenty or thirty,

while others are exiled two or three hundred lee from their homes.

To a European, it may appear to be no great hardship for a Chinaman to be sent to a small distance, or even to a very distant part of his own country; but there is little doubt that this punishment is felt very severely by those who have to undergo it. A man is thus separated from his friends, and is unable to attend to those sacred rites, which every native s trained up to consider it his duty and pleasure to perform. The tombs of his fathers are neglected, and he can no longer hope to receive those honours after his death in the Hall of Ancestors, to which every good Chinese looks forward as the greatest reward he can receive for a life of virtuous suffering. It is for this purpose that emigrants return to China after years of absence in a foreign part, and at the risk of losing their accumulated wealth if their absence has been discovered.

These, and other national prejudices, are the foundation of the attachment of a child of Hân to his native district, and which render his separation from it a severe and heart-rending blow. The more we are acquainted with the manners and feelings of these people, the more

we are inclined to bear testimony to the wisdom with which every law and every punishment is suited to them. In no other country on the face of the globe would the same system of legislation be applicable; but as the Chinese form a nation entirely *sui generis*, it cannot be denied that their code of laws is especially fitted for the people for whom it was framed.

Tartary is the country to which criminals are sent, when they are banished entirely from their own. There they may follow their usual occupations, and are sometimes even invested with command. Very little restriction is imposed upon them, but they are required to report themselves at stated intervals to the authorities. Some whose exile is merely temporary contrive to pass their time in an agreeable manner, and return well-pleased with their excursion. In general, however, the natives dread this kind of punishment, especially those who reside at Canton. They call it being sent to "the cold country," and shudder with horror at the idea.

Although hard frosts are familiar to the people in the neighbourhood of Peking, and other parts more to the northward, they are very rarely experienced so near the tropics as

the city of Quan-tung. The last fall of snow seen there took place nearly half a century back, in the 55th year of the reign of Keen-loong, and so little accustomed were the natives to the phenomenon, that they could not at all understand what it was, but repeatedly asked each other, "What is this?" They fancied it at first to be cotton, and afterwards gave it the name of 'goose-tail.'

A very severe punishment has been introduced by the reigning dynasty, since the original formation of the Code of Laws. It is intended as a substitute for the sentence of death, which it was usual to pass upon the relatives of traitors. It consists of a transportation to, and slavery for life at, Elee, a government station in a remote province of Tartary, annexed by the late emperor Keen-loong to the dominions of China. To this Siberia of the Chinese the wife and family of the criminal may proceed, and the regulations are very strict in pointing out their privileges on their return.

Since the publication by Sir George Staunton of his excellent translation of the Ta Tsing, Leu Lee, or code of Chinese laws, we are no longer in doubt as to the nature of the offences which are considered the most unpardonable in this

singular country. Although on the whole the regulations are most excellent, and suited with the greatest wisdom to the people for whom they were intended, they have still a few glaring defects. It is impossible, in a slight sketch like the present, to enter into any kind of detail on this subject, it will be merely necessary to mention one or two points, which come more immediately under the notice of foreigners, and with which they are occasionally concerned.

These words occur in one part of the volume above alluded to:—"In general, all foreigners who come to submit themselves to the government of the empire shall, when guilty of offences, be tried and sentenced according to the established laws." It is well known that this order is not in force at the present day; but from the idea that the "Fan-quis" are a race of barbarians, who are not fit to be governed by the same laws as the natives of the Celestial Empire, they have regulations framed for them by the government, which are in some points very severe.

The law of homicide is more particularly complained of by the strangers, as in every case of accidental death, the authorities insist upon a person being delivered up to them for execution; whereas, when the Chinese themselves are

alone concerned, a compensation is made by the accidental homicide to the relations of the deceased, by the payment of a sum of money.

The foreigners are not the only people in China, who are governed by laws which differ in some points from those to which the greater number are subjected. Indeed it would have been impossible in such extensive dominions, when the population consists of so many different tribes, and when the weakness of the government is so very apparent, to have framed one set of regulations which would be applicable to every individual, and in accordance with the prejudices and customs of the whole.

It has been mentioned that the Tân-kea, or river population, are governed by distinct laws. The Tartars also are punished with a whip instead of the bamboo, and when, by the common laws, they would be banished the country, they are merely subjected to the cangue. It is impossible to say, in fact, whether other natives have not peculiar privileges or indulgences, especially those persons who are feared by the government, and whose rebellions have been alone suppressed by bribery and corruption. Of this kind are those Chinese in the immediate neighbourhood of the Ma-out-tse or independent

mountaineers, and the Chin-tcheu-men of the southern coast of Fokien.

To wield the sceptre of such an immense empire, and to keep down the spirit of its hundreds of millions of inhabitants, must be no easy task; and as the men who framed the laws foresaw that it would be impossible to do this without making the people fear as well as respect them, they devised those barbarous severities, which are now almost totally abandoned, when it is found that such severe examples are no longer required. As the emperors well knew the insecurity of their throne, and the difficulty of repressing rebellion when once established, they seem to have determined by rigorous measures to check it at its very commencement; in the same way as some of our most enlightened generals have considered it necessary to give up a town to pillage, which has obstinately resisted their arms, in order to prevent others from following the example.

This idea most probably gave rise to the law against high treason, which stands thus in the Leu Lee:—"High treason is either treason against the state, by an attempt to subvert the established government, or treason against the sovereign, by attempting to destroy the place

in which he resides, the temple in which his family is worshipped, or the tombs in which the remains of his ancestors are deposited. All persons convicted of having been principals, or accessories to the actual or designed commission of this heinous crime, shall suffer death by a slow and painful execution.

"All the male relations in the first degree, at or above the age of sixteen, of persons convicted as aforesaid, namely, the father, grandfather, sons, grandsons, paternal uncles, and their sons respectively, shall, without any regard to their place of residence, or to the actual or acquired infirmities of particular individuals, be *indiscriminately beheaded.* All the other male relations, at or above the age of sixteen, however distant their relationship, and whether by blood or by marriage, shall likewise suffer death, by being beheaded, if they were living under the same roof with the treasonable offender at the time the offence was committed.

"The male relations in the first degree, under the age of sixteen, and the female relations in the first degree, of all ages, shall be distributed as slaves among the officers of state. The property of every description belonging to

treasonable offenders, shall be confiscated for the use and service of government. Any person who shall apprehend, and deliver into the custody of a magistrate, an offender against this law, shall be employed forthwith under government, according to his qualification; or if he is already an officer in the employ of government he shall be suitably promoted; and in every case he shall be rewarded with the possession of the whole of the confiscated property of the offender."

There are numerous instances on record of this barbarous law having been put in operation, where whole clans of people have been exterminated for the offence of a single ambitious individual. At the present time the punishment does not often extend beyond the guilty person.

Many reasons might be assigned for its adoption in former years, in addition to the cruel policy of doing every thing on a large scale, of setting a gigantic example before the eyes of such countless myriads of people. As the Emperor is the High Priest of the realm, and is considered the "Son of Heaven," and almost reverenced as a Supreme Being, the enormity of the crime of trying to do him injury would be thought so great, that it would

be deemed preferable, that even the innocent should suffer rather than that the guilty should escape. Some have supposed that the extermination of the relatives was required as a necessary act of self-preservation; as by the ancient precepts, it is enjoined on a son to pursue the author of his father's death to extremity, and even Con-fu-tse's advice to a child was "not to live under the same heaven with the slayer of his father."

The laws against treason are the greatest defects of the Chinese legislation; for besides the offences mentioned above a host of others are included, which are of so complex a nature and have so many subdivisions and interpretations, that it is almost impossible for a person to avoid being brought under them, if he has committed any misdemeanor whatever. Thus treasonable offences embrace: 1. Rebellion. 2. Disloyalty, which means, among other things, attempting to destroy the temples, tombs, or palaces of either the living or the dead monarchs. 3. Desertion, which includes emigration, and the betraying a military post. 4. Parricide, killing father, mother, uncle, aunt, grandfather or grandmother. 5. Massacre, or killing three or

four individuals in one family. 6. Sacrilege. 7. Impiety. 8. *Discord.* 9. *Insubordination.*

By the same law, every favour shown by natives to foreigners is regarded as traitorous, so that they dare not openly espouse their interests without rendering themselves amenable to punishment. Smuggling and other illicit transactions are considered in the same light, and could not, therefore, be carried on without the connivance of the mandarins. To make this branch of the legislature complete, no saving or extenuating circumstance is ever mentioned throughout the code, without having appended to it the words, "except in cases of treason."

Many other quotations might be made from the Leu Lee, in order to show that the Chinese code of laws are in some respects very defective, while in other points they are so minute and oppressive that they would not be borne by any other people. The honour of women is protected with the most jealous care, but at the same time their failings are punished with the greatest severity. A degree of consideration is always paid to their more gentle nature, so that the penalties for their faults are somewhat miti-

gated. Old men, and children under fifteen years of age, as also persons afflicted with natural or acquired infirmities, have some portion of pity shown them, and are not subjected to the extreme severities of the law.

The parts of the Chinese code, however, which are the most repugnant to the feelings of Englishman, are those wherein the family circle is invaded, and a man cannot manage his own affairs without a reference to the mandarins. The magistrate is the universal arbitrator between husband and wife; so that, when married people cannot agree upon matters of importance, he settles the question with the greatest nonchalance, and often without any consideration to the wishes of either of the parties. This is well illustrated in the little novel of "The Twin Sisters," where the father and mother, separately choose a husband apiece for each of their fair daughters, and as a great disturbance is created by the opposition of the different interests, the affair is necessarily brought before the mandarin. This gentleman, after patiently hearing the pleadings on both sides, decides that none of the four proposed suitors is fit to marry the damsels, and actually gives both the beautiful twins away to one youth of his own choosing.

A singular plan of obtaining restitution of stolen property is mentioned by Le Comte, the missionary, as the forlorn hope of the inhabitants of the interior.

"The Chinese are wont publicly to vent curses against those who do them wrong, especially if they cannot be revenged on them in other ways. If a man hath been robbed in his house, and one cannot discover the robber, every morning for several days together the family's business is to curse him; the father, children, and servants, take it by turns and relieve one another in this exercise, and with all mischief imaginable. They have, if I may so express it, formulas of foul language and dire expressions, which they repeat a hundred times, bawling as loud as they are able, at the gate or upon the house-top, and they imagine that the robber will come to some harm by them, wherever he be, till such time as he hath made amends for the wrong.

"Notwithstanding there is not one of a hundred of these robbers that gives any heed to this tedious noise, yet some there be that are frightened at it, and this fear prevents abundance of violence."

CHAPTER XIII.

Our knowledge of the Chinese—The language—Protestant missionaries—Mixed races—Various sects—Superstitious natives—Owners of junks—Native sailors—Chin-tchew men—Idolatry—Teën-how—Procession—Idolatrous entertainment—Offerings to spirits—The compass—Junks at Whampoa—Ghos-pidgeon—Very old custom — Government cargo-boats — Villages — Three days' festival—Chin-chin-Ghos—Salutations—Medley of sweet sounds—A cruise on shore—Ghos-house—Theatre—Musicians—Interior of temple—Notice to quit—Floating fireworks—Cautious retreat.

It is universally allowed, that for the greater part of our knowledge of the manners and customs of the Chinese, we are indebted to the indefatigable exertions of those Romish missionaries, who some time back were well received in China, and even held high offices in the imperial cabinet. The Jesuits were as usual very active in this service, and wrote volumi-

nous works on these subjects, many of which are to be found at the present day in the Louvre at Paris, and elsewhere. Of late years, the Chinese language has been much studied by foreigners, and is becoming so extensively known, that it is supposed by Dr. Marshman, that in a short time it will be universally understood throughout the East, and be as useful for the traveller as English or French is in Europe.

In facilitating the student's progress in this, which has always heretofore been considered the most difficult of all languages, the Protestant missionaries, and those chiefly from our own country, have exerted themselves of late years; so that by the labours of Morrison, Milne, Marshman, and others, it is rendered much more easy of acquisition. The advantage gained by this knowledge of the language is the greater facility which is afforded for penetrating into the arcana of Chinese literature. By the translation of the native records and books of the learned, we are made acquainted with the notions of this singular people on every point which is interesting. The labour is still proceeding, and there is little doubt that in a few years, the greater number of the

best works which have been published in the Celestial Empire will be as well known in Europe as in the country where they were produced.

Among other matters which have come to light during the course of these investigations, the religious and superstitious opinions and practices of the Chinese have excited great attention, as they present some peculiarities which are not to be observed among any other people. However, as the empire is of such vast extent, and the three hundred millions of inhabitants composed of so many nations, Chinese, Tartars, Monguls, Indian Lolos, and savage Miaos from the mountains, it cannot be supposed that they should all have the same ideas on these subjects. Accordingly we find throughout the empire a great diversity of religions, which are either encouraged or tolerated by the government, or are the remains of those that formerly existed.

"Besides the sublime belief in the one God taught by Con-fu-tsé, and the Chinese priests, called Lao-Kiuns, we find professors of Lamaism, bonzes, and worshippers of Fo, Mahomedans, Jews who emigrated hither in the first centuries after the destruction of Jerusalem, common pagans, and adorers of the heavenly

bodies, and even Jukiaos, or atheists, who inculcate merely lessons of virtue."* Christianity also exists there, but to a very limited extent, and is even then so mixed up with the idolatrous ceremonies of the natives that it is scarcely to be recognised. In fine, the Chinese have so imperfect a notion of true religion, that they seem absolutely indifferent to which sect they belong; but giving full sway to their natural superstition, they often mix up many creeds together, and pay their adoration to whatever comes in their way.

The visitor to Canton has very little opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with the real sentiments of the people upon these subjects, as he sees little of the state religion so intimately blended with the government of the country, and which every native is obliged to respect. Still there are many of the ceremonies of other sects he can examine, and as these are joined with idolatrous practices, they never fail to excite his curiosity. He watches with a peculiar interest the pains which are taken to appease the spirits of the wind and waters by the native sailors, and expresses his astonishment at the wonderful similarity of the

* Shoberl's Survey of Christianity, p. 93.

practice in the Temple of Honan to those which he has observed among the Catholics of Europe.

It will be as well to describe that which may be seen by the stranger upon his arrival, with the impressions usually created, before any attempt is made to give an outline of the present state of religion in China, or the prospects for the diffusion of Christianity.

The people who inhabit the southern coasts of Quan-tung and Fokien are the most enterprising of the Chinese, being the owners of the large junks which trade to Siam, Japan, Cambodia, and various other parts to the southward. As their occupations are chiefly maritime, they are necessarily exposed to greater risks than the generality of their countrymen, by which means they are rendered more robust and vigorous. They go by the general name of Chin-tchew men, and affect to despise their more effeminate brethren, whom they look upon as almost belonging to another race.

The Chinese sailors are, in general, an ignorant, worthless set of people, but are so superstitious, that they never loose a sail or heave an anchor without going through some forms of idolatrous worship, which they consider necessary to ensure their success. The object of

their adoration is a female figure, whom they call "Tëen-how," or Queen of Heaven, and who is considered the especial patroness of sailors. All those who dwell on the water perform the same rites, from one end of the empire to the other.

We have mentioned the way in which these rites are conducted on board the outside pilot boats, and it has been noticed far away inland on the waters of the grand canal. The extent of the ceremonies appears to be in proportion to the size and importance of the vessel which is to be protected; and on account of the unwieldy shape and construction of the native junks, very little can be done by the most active exertions of the seamen: to implore the assistance of a superhuman power is their only resource in times of difficulty and danger.

Mr. Gutzlaff, the Prussian missionary, who took one or two voyages in these vessels, gives an interesting description of the superstitious practices of these people.*

"The most disgusting thing on board a junk is idolatry, the rites of which are performed with the greatest punctuality. The goddess of the sea is Ma-tsoo-po called also Tëen-how,

* Journal, p. 97.

or 'Queen of Heaven.' She is said to have been a virgin, who lived some centuries ago in Fuh-keen, near the district of Fuh-chow. On account of having with great fortitude, and by a kind of miracle, saved her brother who was on the point of drowning, she was deified, and loaded with titles, not dissimilar to those bestowed on the Virgin Mary. Every vessel is furnished with an image of this goddess, before whom a lamp is kept burning. Some satellites in hideous shape stand round the portly queen, who is always represented in a sitting posture. Cups of tea are placed before her, and some tinsel adorns her shrine.

"When a vessel is about to proceed on a voyage, Tëen-how is taken in procession to a temple, where many offerings are displayed before her. The priest recites some prayers, the mate makes several prostrations, and the captain usually honours her by appearing in a full dress, before her image. An entertainment is then given, and the food presented to the idol is speedily devoured. Afterwards, the good mother, who does not partake of the gross earthly substance, is carried in front of a stage, to behold the minstrels, and to admire the dexterity of the actors; thence she is brought

back with music, to the junk, where the merry peals of the gong receive the venerable old inmate, and the jolly sailors anxiously strive to seize whatever may happen to remain of her banquet.

"The care of the goddess is intrusted to the priest, who never dares to appear before her with his face unwashed. Every morning he puts sticks of burning incense into the censer, and repeats his ceremonies in every part of the ship, not even excepting the cook's room. When the junk reaches any promontory, or when contrary winds prevail, the priest makes an offering to the spirits of the mountains and of the air. On such occasions, and on such only, pigs and fowls are killed.

"When the offering is duly arranged, the priest adds to it spirits and fruit, burns gilt paper, makes several prostrations, cries out to the sailors, "Follow the Spirits!" when they suddenly rise and devour most of the sacrifice. When sailing out of a river, offerings of paper are constantly thrown out near the rudder. But to no part of the junk are so many offerings made as to the compass. Red cloth, which is also tied to the rudder and cable, is put over it; incense-sticks in great quantities are kindled;

and gilt paper, made into the form of a junk, is burnt before it.

"Near the compass are placed tobacco, a pipe, and a burning lamp, the joint property of all, and hither they all crowd to enjoy themselves. When there is a calm, the sailors generally contribute a certain quantity of gilt paper, which, pasted into the form of a junk, is set adrift. If no wind follows, the goddess is thought to be out of humour, and recourse is had to the demons of the air. When all endeavours prove unsuccessful, the offerings cease, and the sailors wait with indifference."

All the way up the river to Canton, the same kind of practices may be observed, and you are at first inclined to believe, that in these rites and ceremonies consists the whole of the religion of the Chinese.

Often when you are walking the deck at Whampoa, and enjoying the cool air of the summer evening, every thing around you seems at rest, and you distinctly hear every stroke of the ship's bell at the top of the Reach, as it is wafted across the calm, unruffled surface of the water.

Your eye rests with pleasure upon the small junk which is coming down the river towards you, borne slowly along by the current unaided

by either oar or sail. On a sudden, you are awakened from your reverie by the violent clashing of gongs on board the passing stranger, which continue to be beaten without intermission, and with such force and jarring discord as to be almost deafening. The slumbering sailor is awakened as he lies upon the booms, and raises himself upon his elbow to learn the occasion of the uproar; then muttering a curse at the Chinamen, he tries to compose himself again, but is compelled against his will to watch the progress of the vessel.

As the junk is borne along the surface of the tide, basket after basket of crackers is raised aloft and the contents exploded, enveloping the vessel in a cloud of mist; while the tiny, sharp reports add to the harmony of the clanging brass. Thus the smoky boat proceeds, leaving behind her trains of fire, from the flaming papers thrown over her stern, and which float upon the water in her wake.

At this scene a slight feeling of awe comes over you, which it is impossible to repress; and when you are told that these are religious ceremonies, they appear like the sacrifices to infernal demons; and you feel inclined to give credence to the vulgar notion of the sailors, that they are intended to "appease the devil."

On more mature reflection, however, you look upon these observances with respect, when you consider that superstition is the religion of the uninformed mind;—the natural craving of the soul of man to assert its dependence upon, and connexion with, the divine and infinite spirit of the universe.

The Chinese with whom foreigners converse, call this "Ghos-pidgeon." Ghos or Jos meaning God, and pidgeon, business; so that they mean to say it is *God's business.* The natives cannot pronounce the word *business* properly, whatever pains you take with them. The nearest they can come to it is, *bidg-ness,* which directly afterwards degenerates into *bid-geon,* and finally *pidgeon.* It is impossible to say in which of the organs of the mouth or palate the defect lies, but there seem to be some organic peculiarities, which are plastic at the birth, but which become permanently fixed at the cessation of the growth of the body; so that you would be always able to distinguish a Chinaman by his enunciation, as you do a Frenchman or a German, though they may have resided for many years in a foreign country.

If you ask a Chinese why he performs these ceremonies, he does not attempt to show that

they are done as acts of duty or devotion, but merely tells you "It have very olo custom;" and therefore, as his forefathers did the like, he is obliged to follow the example, without inquiring the why or the wherefore. It appears that Teen-how is among the number of the divinities belonging to the sect of Con-fu-tsé; but this does not prevent the Chinese sailors from paying adoration to the idols of Budh, as they have been observed making their obeisance to the reclining statue of that god, as they passed his temple in their junks.

The Ghos-pidgeon of the Chinese is a frequent source of annoyance to those who reside in the ships at Whampoa. Cooped up four or five months in one of these vessels, the time appears to pass very slowly, and however much you may be amused by the manners of the natives, you soon prefer witnessing those which are of a quiet nature. To listen to Chinese music at all is far from agreeable, but to have it dinned into your ears for days together is intolerable.

If you happen to have brought any saltpetre in your ship, the government chops are sent down from Canton to receive it. The mandarins on board of them are of too much importance to be put out of their way in the least by

the wishes of the Fan-quis; so they order the priests to perform the ceremonies as usual. As the chops are lashed on either side of the vessel, the gongs and cymbals are beaten regularly at stated intervals, for half an hour at a time, and make such an abominable clatter, that your head aches for hours afterwards with the noise. Some of the seamen take the opportunity when nobody is looking, to pelt the musicians with portions of yams or sweet potatoes, which causes them to remain quiet for a second, but they never fail to renew their clamour with double vigour, as if to spite their tormentors.

On certain days in every moon, general thanksgivings are held by the people in each of the villages. To those which are situated near the banks of the river, all the men who dwell upon the water resort at these times. On particular holiday occasions, the festival continues for three days in succession, during the whole of which time, day and night, there is a continual uproar, which may be heard for some miles in every direction. The two hamlets which are near the shipping at Whampoa are, if possible, more noisy than the rest, so that those on board can watch the proceedings and

those which I witnessed at Canton at the opening of the new year of business; and the worship of the gods is always accompanied with theatrical performances, and the clamour of bands of music.

The Canton English for these exhibitions is "Chin-chin Ghos" or, thanksgiving to God; and certainly there is this to be said in their favour, that if the poor people really feel grateful for the blessings they enjoy, they do not lock up their feelings in their breasts, or express them in a feeble, languid manner, but give full vent to their exultation in innocent amusement and peals of hearty laughter.

The word *chin-chin* is supposed to be derived from the usual salutation performed between natives of equal rank to each other. These matters of etiquette are all regulated by law, so that when a man meets a friend, he closes his hands and raises them to his head two or three times, uttering at the same time the words, "Haou—Tsing! Tsing!" which means, "Hail, hail! How do you do?" The foreigners, catching at the latter words, have tried to imitate them by *ching-ching*. At the present day, the Chinese of Canton always accost a foreigner or wish him good day, by shaking his hand, and

saying with great gravity, "I chin-chin you." This they sometimes lengthen out into "I chin-chin you werry fine day."

During the time of the three days' festival, there was a continual uproar on both sides of the river, as if each set of people were trying to make their exhibition the more attractive. During the night-time, there was scarcely any possibility of procuring sleep on board the ship, so that it was necessary frequently to get up and walk the deck. The Ghos-houses could be seen distinctly through the darkness, as they were illuminated with numerous lamps and coloured lanterns, suspended around. The trumpets, drums, and gongs sounded across the water with a distinctness which made one wish they brought forth better harmony. Above them all could be occasionally heard the squeaking of the male tragedians imitating the female voice, or giving utterance to their sorrows and despair in shrieking songs. The path leading from the quay and the stationary boats was every now and then rendered visible, by the tiny scintillations of small fireworks, exploded by those who were returning from the jubilee.

These apparently merry proceedings, con-

tinuing for so long a time, could not fail to awaken the curiosity of the strangers and make them wish to examine them a little closer. Notwithstanding the apparent probability of getting a sound drubbing from the natives, by the appearance of Fan-quis among them when thus excited, a few were determined to try their fortune.

A couple of friends and myself set off for Danes Island, on one of the evenings when the entertainment was at its height. On arriving at the shore, we found some little difficulty in wedging the boat through the san-pans collected there, and were at last obliged to walk over many of them in order to reach the stone quay. The natives were very inoffensive and goodnatured and made way on every side, especially when they saw the sticks which we had taken the precaution to carry with us.

Walking along the paved causeway, which is raised some distance above the slimy paddy-ground, we approached the scene of all the bustle, as the path wound with a gentle curve round the foot of a small steep hillock, covered in front with shrubs and stunted trees. After rounding the little hill, the path suddenly widened into a small flat of firm, dry ground,

the grass of which appeared to have been completely worn away by the continued trampling of naked feet.

This was the centre of all the commotion, the very pivot of all the festivity. The eminence round which we had walked terminated abruptly at the back part, so as to present, when looking at it behind, a cliff-like, craggy appearance. In the face of the rock had been formed a cavity, which was now properly plastered and finished into a large square room. In fact a ghos-house or temple had been there formed, having a well-paved floor and a neatly-painted entrance. Nothing but the door could be seen at first, so that it created no little surprise upon looking into it, to find a chamber decorated with lanterns and tinsel, and filled with company.

Immediately opposite to the ghos-house, a theatre was erected high above the heads of the assembled multitude, who were roaring with laughter at the grotesque postures and grimaces assumed by the comedians. The rich, gaudy dresses of the actors contrasted strangely with the plain blue and red garments of the spectatators. Another kind of stage was erected near that of the comedians, on which sat the musicians with their noisy instruments. They

seemed to attract equal attention with the actors, as the people ran from one to the other nearly in proportion to the noise created by the one or the other party.

As we mixed freely with the natives before the theatres without being noticed, we thought that we might as well enter the temple and see what was going on within. Passing in with the crowd, we soon found ourselves in the centre of the room, surrounded by people who were looking at and talking to each other. A few variegated lanterns were hung about the apartment, and small lamps and sticks of incense were burning before the shrine of tinsel and coloured paper. No ceremony of any kind was going forward, neither did the natives manifest any signs of devotion.

Our presence, however, among them did not appear to please, for they soon began to elbow and push us about, uttering at the same time the word "Fan-qui" with any thing but pleasantry. A disturbance would very quickly have been created, if one of the natives had not come up and spoken to us. He appeared to be a man in authority, and was able to utter a few words of English. He said, "I thinkee more better you

go," and as we agreed with him in opinion, we immediately took our departure.

When outside the ghos-house, our party turned to the right, with the intention of proceeding towards the village. The path led round a large pond where a number of people were collected, amusing themselves by letting off curious fireworks on the water. The little boats and aquatic birds, travelled across the surface with great rapidity, as the tiny streams of fire issued from them to be quenched in the water beneath.

We were barely able to make these observations, for we now found ourselves mobbed by natives, among whom we could distinguish some of those who had been with us in the temple, and who had followed to see us conducted back to our boat. As we had arrived at this spot unnoticed and alone, we were now amply compensated, by being attended back again by a crowd of natives, whom it was difficult to keep at a respectful distance. They would sometimes come close up to our heels, jabbering and hooting, and would offer us unripe or decayed fruit. This being unnoticed, they now and then threw it towards us as they would to a wild animal in a cage.

Lest these jokes should be carried to too great a length, and stones and brickbats flung instead of the vegetables, we usually turned about on these occasions, and made those behind us scamper away, for a moment, by offering to bamboo them. This was the only way to deal with the Chinese; for if we had appeared at all afraid of them, or had played with them in the least, they would very soon have taken advantage of their numbers, and placed us in an uncomfortable predicament. As it was, we made the best of our way to the quay, where after some little trouble we found our boat, and were soon safe on ship-board.

This description is intended to convey an idea of the way in which the festivals of Chin-chin Ghos are conducted at Whampoa. It will be perceived, that they resemble very much those which have been described as occurring in the streets of Canton, but with the difference, that the entertainments are of a more simple kind. This might naturally be expected, when we consider that the one was held in an obscure country place, and the other in the most wealthy city of the empire. As these festivals form part of the state religion, there is little doubt that they are authorized by the government, and

that the expenses are defrayed by a general subscription of the people. Females are entirely excluded from the more crowded places, although the women come near the spot in their boats, and look on at the wonders from a distance.

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